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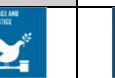



Northern Uganda Resilience Initiative Annual Progress Report, 2019



Coordination Function, NURI
March 2020

Summary of Northern Uganda Resilience Initiative (NURI)

<p>Key results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% increase on average annual agricultural cash income of participating households Reduction in number of participating households reporting periods of food insecurity Increase in the number of people benefitting from supported WRM interventions <p>Justification for support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of poverty in Northern Uganda, exacerbated by the influx of refugees Adverse effects of climate change on small-scale farmers who are dependent on rain-fed agriculture. The impact is exacerbated in Northern Uganda by the high level of poverty and the refugee influx. Support to both refugees and host communities will promote Uganda's progressive refugee policies, protect the asylum space and safeguard Uganda as a safe haven for refugees. The engagement thus, has strategic significance for Denmark. With many years of experience from Northern Uganda, including working with refugees and host communities, NURI is uniquely placed to promote enhanced resilience and equitable economic development, both through its own interventions and by sharing best practices and lessons learnt. 	File No.	2018-46856					
	Country	Uganda					
	Responsible Unit	2730 – Kampala					
	Sector	31120, Agricultural development					
	Partner	NURI Coordination Function (NURI CF)					
	DKK mill.	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Tot.
	Commitment	3.0	46.5	78.5	78.0	79.0	285
	Projected ann. disb.	3.0	46.5	78.5	78.0	79.0	285
	Duration	2018 – 2022					
	Previous grants	DKK 150 million					
	Finance Act code	06.32.01.12 Uganda					
	Head of unit	Nicolaj A. Hejberg Petersen					
	Desk officer	Victor Azza Vuzzi					
	Financial officer	Hanne Fritzen					
Relevant SDGs [Maximum 5 – highlight with grey]							
							
No Poverty	No Hunger	Good Health, Wellbeing	Quality Education	Gender Equality	Clean Water, Sanitation		
							
Affordable Clean Energy	Decent Jobs, Econ. Growth	Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure	Reduced Inequalities	Sustainable Cities, Communities	Responsible Consumption & Production		
							
Climate Action	Life below Water	Life on Land	Peace & Justice, strong Inst.	Partnerships for Goals			

Strategic objectives:

Enhanced resilience and equitable economic development in supported areas of Northern Uganda, including for refugees and host communities

Justification for choice of partner:

NURI CF has many years of experience from Northern Uganda. It is uniquely qualified to build on her achievements and share best practices and lessons. Implementing through NURI CF will reduce fiduciary risks and improve efficiency in project delivery like it did during the previous programme i.e. Recovery and Development in Northern Uganda

Summary:

NURI will promote climate smart agriculture, agriculture-related rural infrastructure, and water resources management. It will also promote VSLA and SRHR and target refugees & host communities, women and youths to ensure equitable development and peaceful coexistence. The project will seek synergy with the other engagements under UPSIDE and coordinate with other interventions

Budget:

Output 1: Increased agricultural output of small-scale farmers	106
Output 2: Agric. related rural infrastructure renovated / constructed	106
Output 3: Agric. related physical & natural water infrastructure constructed or made more resilient	35
Coordination incl. TA and M&E	24
Contingency	14
Total	285

Map of Uganda Showing NURI Districts

(The names of the NURI districts are highlighted in green, new districts of Pakwach, Obongi and Madi-Okollo not yet included)

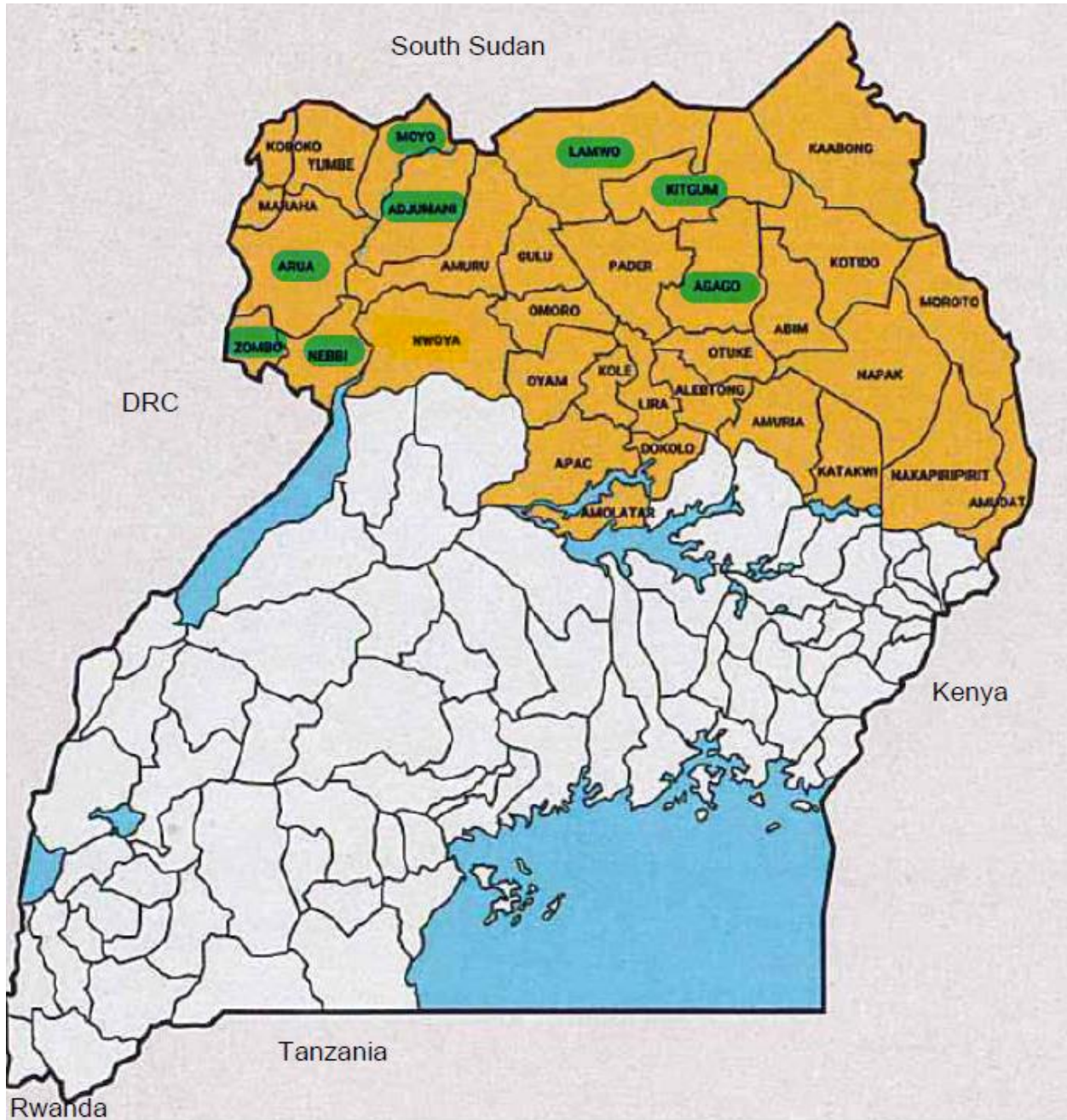


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List of Acronyms

Abb.	Full text
aBi	Agricultural Business Initiative
AEO	Agriculture Extension Officers
AES	Agriculture Extension Supervisors
AFARD	Agency for Accelerated Regional Development
ASSP	Agriculture sector strategic plan
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CF	Coordination Function
CMC	Catchment Management Committee
CMP	Catchment Management Plan
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
Danida	Danish International Development Assistance
DAR	Development Assistance to Refugee Hosting Areas
DEC	District Executive Council
DFA	District Farmers Association
DINU	Development Initiative for Northern Uganda
DKK	Danish Kroner
DLG	District Local Government
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
DDEG	Discretion Development Equalisation Grant
DTPC	District Technical Planning Committee
DWRM	Directorate for Water Resource Management
FG	Farmer Group
FPO	Focal Point Officer
GoU	Government of Uganda
IMC	Implementation Monitoring Committee
IP	Implementing Partner
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industries and Fisheries
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NDP	National Development Plan
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PDP	Parish Development Plan
PMP	Production and Marketing Plan
PRDP	Peace Recovery and Development Plan
PRELNOR	Project for the restoration of livelihoods in the Northern region
RALNUC	Restoration of Agricultural Livelihoods in Northern Uganda

Abb.	Full text
RAU	Resilience Agricultural Unit
RDE	Royal Danish Embassy
RDNUC	Recovery and Development in Northern Uganda
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
UGX	Ugandan Shillings
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNWMZ	Upper Nile Water Management Zone
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Associations
WRM	Water Resource Management

1.0 Introduction

NURI (Northern Uganda Resilience Initiative) is one of eight development engagements under the Denmark-Uganda Country Programme 2018–2022. Overall, the Country Programme aims to contribute to poverty reduction through inclusive and sustainable economic growth, promoting democracy, good governance and human rights, and support Uganda’s stabilising role in the region.

The Country Program is divided into two Thematic Objectives; UPSIDE (Uganda Programme for Sustainable and Inclusive Development of the Economy) and UPGRADE (Uganda Programme for Governance, Rights, Accountability and Democracy)

NURI is the largest of the three Development Engagements under UPSIDE and contributes to the objective of sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The total Danish contribution to NURI is DKK 285 million over the five-year period from 2018-2022, with one output area having started in mid-2018, and the other two at the start of 2019. DKK 35 million of the budget-frame derives from the Danish Climate Change Envelope (CCE).

The objective of NURI at outcome level is *enhanced resilience and equitable economic development in supported areas of Northern Uganda, including for refugees and refugee-hosting communities*. NURI pursues this objective by supporting activities in climate smart agriculture (CSA), rural infrastructure (RI), and water resources management (WRM). Activities in support of agriculture focus on improving farmers knowledge on climate-smart production methods, as well as their understanding of, and ability to engage with, markets and services. Support to rural infrastructure and water resource management are in those areas that contribute to agriculture sector outcomes, particularly access to markets and improving water resource management within the landscape. Water Resource Management activities address selected micro-catchments within the Ministry of Water and Environments wider plans for Northern Ugandan watersheds.

In order to support Uganda’s progressive refugee policy and the nexus between development and humanitarian action, refugees and their host communities are among the beneficiaries in those NURI implementing districts hosting refugee settlements.

Geographically the programme covers 11 districts in the West Nile and Acholi Sub Regions of Northern Uganda. The districts are Agago, Kitgum and Lamwo in Acholi sub-region and Arua, Madi-Okollo, Pakwach, Nebbi, Zombo, Moyo, Obongi and Adjumani in West Nile sub-region. The selected settlements are Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement in Madi-Okollo District, Palorinya Refugee Settlement in Obongi District, Maaji 1,2 and 3 and Mungla 1 and 2 settlements in Adjumani District and Palabek Refugee Settlement in Lamwo District. At the end of the reporting period a plan for expansion of the budget to include Koboko District and Imvepi Settlement in Arua was introduced.

2.0 Developments in the Programme Area

Northern Uganda was in general peaceful through the reporting period with communities, local leaders and development practitioners engaging in a number of economic, social and political activities in a bid to help the region recover from the effects of the LRA war and support the hosting of a large refugee population. Agricultural production is the major economic activity with trade in agricultural commodities like sesame, beans, soybeans, cassava and sunflower on-going.

According to MoFPED, economic growth since 2017 accelerated to about 5.5%. Results from the Uganda poverty map exercise conducted by UBOS (in collaboration with UNICEF and The World Bank) in October 2019 showed considerable economic growth in the region. The percentage of the population of Northern Uganda, living below the poverty line, has reduced from 44% to 33% from 2013 to 2017.

The NURI baseline study revealed that the average annual agricultural related cash income is 1,685,419 UGX for members of new national farmer groups, which translates to about 4,383 UGX per household (slightly over USD 1 per day). This income level is marginal in covering household needs and some households experience food shortages, particularly between May and August. In general, even though poverty rate has reduced in the region, the majority of the population, of whom are subsistence farmers, are vulnerable to shocks such unpredictable rainfall.

The context in which NURI is implemented is a combination of humanitarian and development assistance due to the refugee population settled in the region. Development activities are aligned to the government of Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP) II and implemented along-side donor-funded government led programmes like DDEG, NUSAF 3, PRELNOR and DINU. Refugee operations are overseen by the OPM and refugee and host interventions are coordinated through the CRRF. Agricultural livelihood activities are guided by MAAIFs Agricultural sector strategic plan (ASSP) 2015/16 – 2019/20 and emphasis is on promoting priority commodities like beans, maize, rice and cassava.

By the end of the reporting period, Northern Uganda was hosting a total of 810,529 refugees mainly from South Sudan; 757,195 settled in West-Nile and 53,334 in Acholi (statistic provided by UNHCR). This means that 57.6% of Uganda's total refugee population is settled in the region. The influx from South Sudan had fallen by October 2018 but gradually increased through 2019.

The government of Uganda gazetted two new districts during the reporting period; Madi Okollo from Arua and Obongi from Moyo. This will impact the District Local Government (DLG) capacity for engagement in development activities in the affected districts for some time, as new structures and staffing come into effect. In the older districts, some new sub-counties were carved out of the old ones which impacted somewhat on monitoring of NURI activities by DLGs during the year. Overall collaboration and partnerships with both the local governments and other development actors was smooth and effective for implementation of NURI activities in the region.

2.1 Context in West-Nile

Weather

The weather pattern varied across the region with most parts of the NURI districts having unusual weather patterns. The first season rains were delayed causing late start of production activities. In the second season, rains went above normal causing delay in flowering, rotting in the field, poor pod filling, high incidence of disease and generally poor yields. High incidence of diseases was especially in beans, soybeans and potatoes while rotting was widespread in sesame. Hailstorms in Zombo caused severe destruction for beans and bananas.

Flooding in general affected post-harvest handling activities like drying and sorting for sesame, cassava, soybeans and beans. In Moyo and Adjumani, some refugee and host community households were displaced when shelters collapsed due to floods.

Economic activities

Trade in agricultural commodities dominated economic activity in the region during the reporting period. This attracted traders from South Sudan, Congo and neighbouring districts like Gulu, Amuru, Nwoya, Lira, Kitgum and sometimes distant places like Kampala and Mbale. Widely traded items included cassava, maize, beans, sorghum, rice and bananas. Other items included household utensils, cosmetics, soap, sugar and salt. There was market price increase for nearly all the common agricultural produce because of high demand and limited supply. Limited supply resulted from low yields due to unfavourable weather. The price for beans increased on average by 800 UGX, onions by 600 UGX, maize by 500 UGX, rice by 500 UGX, groundnuts by 1000 UGX and cassava by 500 UGX.

Refugee presence and cross-border trade boosted demand for food commodities. In some case, produce was bought directly from farmers' fields, and generally farmers benefited from higher prices due to demand outstripping supply.

Coordination and collaboration

In South West-Nile (Arua, Nebbi, Zombo and Pakwach), NURI CF and implementing partners (AFARD & ARUDIFA) worked in collaboration with DLGs, LLGs and development partners in the region while in North West-Nile (Adjumani & Moyo), NURI CF and RAUs did the same. Two new districts; Madi-Okolo and Obongi were officially launched towards the last half of 2019. Madi-Okollo is made of nine sub-counties (formerly under Arua District) and Obongi consists of three (formerly under Moyo district). There was relatively little impact on NURI activities as both DLGs fulfilled their roles and obligations as in the NURI MoUs. The DLGs supported NURI activities including group assessment and selection, selection of strategic crops, monitoring of field activities and sensitization activities.

Due to the refugee influx and settlements many development partners are operating in the region, in a number of sectors including livelihoods. These include ZOA, Save the Children, Lutheran

World Federation, Mercy Corps, Welt Hunger Hilfe, World Vision, Caritas, Techno Serve, Medicines sans Frontiers, Medical Team International, DRC Livelihood, CEFORD, PALM, CREAM, RICE, NRC, SNV, IRC and ACAV among others. Some of these agencies have long term programmes for instance GIZ with a four years' development programme, 'Response to Increased Demand on Government Services and Creation of Economic Opportunities in Uganda (RISE)' that covers Arua, Adjumani and Moyo with focus on agricultural production, employment opportunities for youth through skills development, capacity building of DLGs, integrated district development planning in support of Local Economic Development. NURI worked in close collaboration with these partners to avoid duplication in the field.

Refugee response

A total of 519,663 refugees from South Sudan are settled in the districts of Arua, Madi-Okollo, Obongi (formerly Moyo) and Adjumani. NURI interventions targeted refugee households and with support from the DLG, LLG, RWCs and UNHCR/OPM, implementation went on smoothly in 2019. The settlement, well-being and protection of the refugee population was overseen by OPM and UNHCR. Also, the operation of the different humanitarian and development actors within the settlements was coordinated and overseen by the OPM. In terms of development interventions, the sectors that have most interventions are livelihoods and environment, water and sanitation, construction, protection, health and education. Towards the end of 2019, the influx slightly increased with daily arrivals registered at 50, meanwhile there were warnings from UNHCR of significant budget reductions.

From observation, the relationship between the refugees and host communities was good. This was evident in the hosting communities providing land for cultivation, mutual understanding within the mixed groups, sharing of social spaces and service centres like schools, health centres and trading places.

2.2 Context in Acholi sub-region

Weather

The region generally experienced unusual weather in 2019. There was delay in the onset of the first season rain as well as excessive rains that stretched from July to December. In the first season, farmers started production activities late and crop performances was affected. In the second season, heavy and prolonged rains caused rotting of crops due to water logging, crops became highly vegetative reducing yield of grains and high post-harvest losses were experienced. These effects were recorded in both farmer fields and demo gardens. Farmers expressed fear of seed shortage in 2020 due to the poor harvest. Agago district was the most affected where 80% of the district experienced water logging. This included the sub-counties of Omot, Lira Palwo, Lokole, Parabongo, Adilang, Lamiyo and parts of Patongo. The heavy rains affected road networks

for marketing and delivery of agro-inputs. Within the farmer households, many cases of malaria and in some instances death from malaria related illness were registered.

Economic activities

Agricultural production and marketing are the main economic activities of farmer households in the region. During the reporting period, trade in agricultural commodities like cotton, sesame, sunflower, maize and ground nuts was common. The market attracted traders from South Sudan and neighbouring districts like Lira, Gulu, Amuru, Soroti and Mbale. Due to the unusual weather resulting in poor yields during the first half of the year, demand for food and grain out-stiped supply and prices were high, especially benefiting farmers who stored produce for later sale. Other economic activities included charcoal burning, sale of domestic animals, brick making, sand mining and stone quarrying as well as petty trade.

Farmers participating in NURI activities complained of high input prices limiting their adoption of technologies including improved seed. Sunflower, which was promoted and widely adopted under RDNUC was particularly affected as the price of the popular variety PAN 7057 rose to 55,000 Ugx per kg from 35,000 Ugx. Most farmers opted for open pollinated varieties despite their lower yield and price.

Coordination and collaboration

NURI CF and RAUs worked in close collaboration with the DLGs, LLGs and development partners in the districts of Kitgum, Lamwo and Agago. During the reporting period, a total of 20 new sub-counties were created and approved for operation as independent entities (6 in Agago, 8 in Kitgum and 6 in Lamwo). This has implications for NURI as it will require sensitization and extra resources for LLGs monitoring of field activities. Both the DLGs and LLGs were involved in a number of NURI implementation activities like assessment and selection of farmer groups, selection of strategic crops and field monitoring.

Agencies that NURI interfaced with during implementation include Lutheran World Federation, GOAL, World Vision, AVSI, ADRA and major programmes like DINU, PRELNOR and NUSAF 3. There were differences in approaches, target group, crop types and magnitude of support. NURI staff attended coordination meetings for livelihood partners that helped to check some irregularities and avoid duplication.

Refugee response

Lamwo district continued to host refugees from South Sudan with a total population reported at 53,334 persons at year end (up from 48,180 in September). OPM and UNHCR played a key role in settling the refugees that arrived in the settlement besides overseeing the activities of the different implementing/operational partners operating in the settlements. In terms of development interventions, the sectors most supported are livelihoods and environment, water and sanitation, construction, protection, health and education. Towards the end of the period UNHCR warned of up-coming reductions in funding for especially livelihood activities.

Insecurity and land issues

In Agago and Kitgum, the sub-counties bordering Karamoja region registered cases of cattle rustling. In Agago alone, about 97 heads of cattle were stolen during the period, causing fear amongst farmers. During the dry season domestic animals are typically left to roam in the Acholi sub-region, a situation taken advantage of by cattle raiders.

Isolated cases of land conflicts were also reported in Lamwo (Paloga, Palabek Ogili and Agoro) and Agago (Omiya pacwa and Paimol) where farmer groups were forced to delayed demo preparation and planting. The case in Palabek Ogili was between the farmer communities and National Forest Authority over boundaries. In Agago 5 groups were forced to hire land after initially prepared sites were lost due to land conflict, while in Lamwo there were 3 groups.

Theft of produce from farms and fields was recorded in all the three districts, especially of sesame and ground nuts drying in the fields. Some fields of sorghum and cassava were destroyed by wild fires and affecting a number of households within NURI farmer groups.

In general, security incidences were isolated cases, and did not prevent the implementation of NURI activities in the three districts. Also, the intervention of the DLGs and LLGs in follow up such cases helped to mitigate the effects within the communities.

3.0 Implementation of Work plan and Budget

This annual report covers the implementation period January to December 2019, and includes the three outputs of the programme; Climate Smart Agriculture, Rural Infrastructure and Water Resource management. The inception period for the programme was reported separately. To the extent that these activities have been integral to the activities conducted in the reporting period, however, they are mentioned in this report.

3.1 Output 1: Climate Smart Agriculture

The objective of this intervention is to improve the knowledge and skills of farmer households and refugees in climate smart agricultural practices which will enable them to increase and sustain their production. The reporting period covers the first and second season rains, called season A and B in NURI plans and reports. Major activities under this output in the reporting period included:

- Farmer groups identified and trained in climate smart agriculture
- Farmers groups trained in VSLA practices
- Capacity building of IP and RAU staff
- Capacity building of DLG production unit
- Farmer groups sensitized on SRHR and GBV issues

3.1.1 Farmer Groups Identified and Trained in Climate Smart Agriculture

Under this intervention, the following activities were conducted by the implementing partners and RAU units:

1. Assessment and selection of farmer groups for support
2. Selection of strategic crops by implementing districts
3. Enterprise selection by farmer groups
4. Preparation of production and marketing plans by new national farmer groups
5. CSA training and establishment of demonstration plots
6. Needs assessment of old national farmer groups
7. Support of farmer groups in collective marketing
8. Radio talk shows

Assessment and selection of farmer groups for support

For the various types of national and refugee farmer groups there are criteria set to ensure correct targeting. The four group types are: old national farmer groups, new national farmer groups, mixed refugee/host farmer groups and women refugee farmer groups. The selection process started in 2019 with sensitization of the sub-county leaders (LC3, CDO, SAS and parish leaders) and community members. Criteria for national groups (old and new) included record keeping, leadership structure, group activities and the amount of support received from other programmes.

For selection of refugees in the supported settlements a mapping exercise preceded selection. This was to take into consideration the concentration of livelihood partners, proximity to land for production and distance to and concentration of host communities. This was followed by sensitization of settlement leadership including OPM/UNHCR, RWC 1 and 3, and LC1. In many cases groups were formed from willing refugee (and in the case of mixed groups, also national) members. Where there were existing groups selection was based on leadership structure, level of previous support and interest in the programme. In Rhino camp and Palabek settlements, the groups that participated in the pilot phase continued in 2019 and additional groups were formed. The awareness raised during the pilot ensured a smooth start. The same process was followed in Palorinya and Adjumani although this was later in the year. Lower local government and settlement leaders were generally active and supportive of the process. A separate report on the selection of strategic crops was prepared. On average, women constituted 65% of the membership for new and old national farmers while youth membership was 30% of the members. The definition of youth in NURI is 18-28 years of age.

The number of groups selected by district and group type is summarised in the table below:

Table 3.1.1.1 Number of farmer groups selected for support under CSA in 2019

Target group	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Moyo	Adjumani	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
Old national groups	200	80	80	50	N/A	N/A	110	100	135	755
New national groups	165	75	75	60	N/A	N/A	105	105	240	825
Mixed groups	56	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	26	0	82
Women refugee groups	64	0	0	0	120	120	0	19	0	323
Total	485	155	155	110	120	120	215	250	375	1,985

Selection of strategic crops by implementing districts

This exercise was done for two group types, first for the new national farmer groups and later refugee groups. NURI CF together with the implementing partners and RAUs organised consultative meetings in every implementing district of South West-Nile and Acholi sub-region, including meetings at sub-country where relevant. Moyo and Adjumani at the time of reporting were working only with refugee households, having started activities mid-year. Strategic crop selection will be in the first quarter of 2020 North West-Nile districts.

The participants of the meetings were representatives from the production/commercial department, key stakeholders implementing similar commodities, key input/produce buyers (like Mukwano, GADCO, OLAM) and farmer groups. An initial 'wish list' was generated after which each crop was assessed based suitability with climate conditions, marketability, crop resistance to pests and diseases, crop yield potential and labour requirements. The crops selected per district are given in the table below;

Table 3.1.1.2 Strategic crops selected per district of intervention

Districts	Crop types
Arua, Madi-Okolo	Beans, cassava, sesame, soybeans
Nebbi	Beans, Irish potatoes, onions, soybeans
Pakwach	Cassava, rice, sesame
Zombo	Beans, Irish potatoes, onions
Kitgum	Sesame, soybeans, sunflower
Lamwo	Cassava, sesame, sunflower
Agago	Sesame, soybeans, sunflower

For each supported settlement a list was generated based on agro-ecological factors in the settlements (soil types), time to maturity, acceptability to the refugee population, possibility for intercropping, marketability and nutritional value. The list was divided into food crops, vegetables and fruit trees. The food crops selected included cassava, sweet potatoes, beans, maize, groundnuts, cowpeas, sorghum and pigeon peas. Vegetables included okra, eggplants, Amaranthus, cabbage, onions, green pepper, sukumawiki, Jute mallow, Nakati, Spider plant and tomatoes. Fruit trees included papaya, passion fruits, mangos and citrus.

Enterprise selection by farmer groups

Enterprise selection by new nationals and old farmer groups

Following selection of strategic crops at the district level enterprise selection exercises were organised for all the farmer groups. In this exercise, using training material including grain sack charts, farmer groups were taken through a profitability analysis of the selected enterprises after

which they were able to make their choices. The result of the selection exercise across the different districts is summarised in the table below:

Table 3.1.1.3 Strategic Crops selected per District by New Farmer Groups for 2019

Strategic crop	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
Cassava	26	0	0	14	3	0	12	55
Sesame	28	0	0	43	64	59	25	219
Soybeans	26	29	0	0	38	17	111	221
Beans	85	29	20	0	0	0	0	134
Sunflower	0	0	0	0	0	29	92	121
Rice	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Irish Potatoes	0	6	47	0	0	0	0	53
Onions	0	11	8	0	0	0	0	19
Total groups	165	75	75	60	105	105	240	825

In West-Nile, beans and soybeans dominated farmers choice of enterprise while in Acholi sub-region it was soybeans and sunflower. Other enterprises were district specific like rice and onions in Pakwach and Zombo. Overall, the selection exercise was well conducted and farmers are moving on well with their choices.

Old national groups generally continued with the strategic crops selected under the previous programme, but there were a few exceptions. The reasons for changing strategic crop varied from difficulty in obtaining seeds, to specific marketing issues, a for example was the case with sunflower in some districts. Farmer groups were advised to diversity their enterprises in order to minimise risks. A summary for the old national groups is given in table 3.1.4 below:

Table 3.1.1.4 Number of Old Farmer Groups per Strategic Crops per District

Strategic crop	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
Cassava	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	13
Sesame	60	10	0	34	86	76	26	292
Soybean	62	27	0	0	18	8	18	133
Beans	78	25	73	0	6	0	0	182
Sunflower	0	0	0	0	0	16	85	101
Rice	0	5	0	3	0	0	0	8
Irish Potatoes	0	1	7	0	0	0	0	8
Onions	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	12
Maize	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Total groups	200	80	80	50	110	100	135	755

Enterprise selection for refugees

In the settlements of Rhino-camp, Palabek, Palorinya and the selected settlement in Adjumani, the exercise was carried out in a similar manner to that for new national groups. Groups were taken through the list of crops, including the pros and cons of different crops. The presentation was done based on the CSA training guide for Women refugee groups, based on household production and mixed groups based on field crops and access to land. In the women refugee groups, each member chose one food crop, three vegetables and three fruit trees. Detailed profitability analysis was not done for the refugee women groups because their main objective for production is to supplement food rations and improve nutrition. The preference was generally for quick maturing vegetables like sukumawiki, amaranthas and fruit seedlings like papaya and passion fruits. A number of groups continued from the NURI pilot, including groups of male and female refugee and youth groups. In the table below these are combined with the figure for Women refugee groups.

The breakdown of the different enterprises selected by refugee groups are given below:

Table 3.1.1.5 Crops/vegetables selected by Refugee Groups in Palabek Settlement

	Crop	Mixed	Women Refugee	Total number of groups
1	Cassava	1		1
2	Sweet potato		14	14
3	Maize	4		4
4	Beans	4		4
5	Cow peas		13	13

6	G/Nut	18		18
7	Pigeon Peas	16		16
8	Sesame	5		5
9	Onions		12	12
10	Tomatoes		5	5
11	Egg Plant		9	9
12	Sukuma wiki		2	2
13	Okra		1	1
	Total	48	56	104

Table 3.1.1.6 Crops/vegetables selected by Refugee Groups in Rhino-Camp Settlement

	Crop Type	Mixed	Women Refugee	Total number of groups
1	Cassava	19	57	76
2	Sweet potato		61	61
3	Maize	26		26
4	Beans			
5	Cow peas		40	40
6	G/Nut	46		46
7	Pigeon Peas	11		11
8	Sesame	10		10
9	Onions		50	50
10	Tomatoes		36	36
11	Egg Plant		12	12
12	Sukuma wiki		25	25
13	Okra		14	14
14	Amaranthas		10	10
15	Cabbage		8	8
16	Green pepper		8	8
17	Mango		18	18
18	Citrus		24	24
19	Pawpaw		28	28
20	Passion		29	29
	Total	112	420	532

Table 3.1.1.7 Vegetables types selected by women refugee Groups in Palorinya and Adjumani Settlements

S/N	Crop type	Palorinya	Adjumani	Total
1	Cow peas	98	72	170
2	Amaranthus	24	12	36
3	Sukumawiki	53	78	131
4	Jute Mallow	21	33	54
5	Nakati	26	0	26
6	Okra	10	60	70
7	Spider Plant	8	0	8
	Total	240	255	495

Preparation of Production and Marketing Plans for national farmer groups

Old and new national farmer groups are supported by extension staff to develop production and marketing plans (PMPs) used to motivate and monitor production levels. The PMP helps farmers plan production activities towards objectives of increased production, marketing and income. PMP data is useful in planning collective marketing. After strategic crop selection the farmer groups were guided to prepare their PMPs by the NURI staff. The PMP development process involves four training sessions; 1-Selection of strategic crop, 2-Collection of household planning data, 3-Preparation of the plan and 4-Finalizing plan and signing of agreement.

For the NURI extension team, the process involved a Training-of-Trainers for extension officers and pre-test sessions of the PMP format with selected farmer groups prior to roll out to all the national groups. Note that the refugee groups are exempted from preparing PMPs since their production potential is limited by land access. The total number of groups that prepared PMPs does not necessarily match with total number of groups supported under CSA. A summary of the number of groups that prepared their PMPs is provided the table 3.1.1.8 below.

Table 3.1.1.8 PMPs prepared per district

PMP	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
2019 PMP prepared - new national groups	163	75	75	60	105	105	240	823
2019 PMP prepared -old national groups	200	80	80	50	110	100	135	755
Total	363	155	155	110	215	205	375	1578

Two groups in Arua did not fully complete the exercise due to intra-groups wrangles. However, they did continue on to CSA training.

At the end of the year, comparison was made between the planned targets and actual production to gauge progress towards achieving the PMP. The progress towards achieving PMP targets varied from crop to crop but in most cases the targets were not met. In Acholi sub-region, farmer groups that cultivated sunflower, soybeans and sesame came closest to achieving their targets. In West-Nile it was soybeans, beans and rice that came closest. By close of 2019, collection of actual production data was still on-going for crops like cassava and marketing activities were carried onto the first quarter of 2020, however, there is a general observation that the production targets will not be achieved due to the weather in the last half of 2019. See below an example of PMP tracking from Agago district.

Table 3.1.1.9a: Summary of planned and actual production for new groups for 2019

Crop	Number of Groups	Production (Kg)		Acres	
		Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Cassava	12	416,998	47,380	190.5	91.5
Sesame	25	117,099	94,736	868.25	827.5
Sunflower	92	611,789	565,012	2,389.5	2091.75
Soya beans	111	333,267	217,331	1,262.75	1036.5
TOTAL	240.0	1,479,153	924,459	4,711	4,047

N.B. Cassava harvest was still on-going

Table 3.1.1.9b: Summary of planned and actual production for old groups for 2019

Crop	Number of Groups	Production (Kg)		Acres	
		Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Maize	6	127,340	117,177	314	287
Sesame	26	205,958	185,847	1,251	1,237
Sunflower	81	1,004,571	798,147	2,899	2,434
Soya beans	22	185,005	106,551	646	525
TOTAL	135	1,522,874	1,207,722	5,110	4,483

Training in CSA practices

CSA training was conducted for all the new national farmer and refugee groups. The old national groups were supported on individual projects and as all have previously been through GAP training on their selected strategic crop, only a few of those who had selected a different strategic crop under NURI received CSA training. The training was broken down into 10 different sessions for new nationals as given below:

1. Setting the ground/farmer institutional development
2. Climate, climate change and its impact on Agriculture and food security

3. Climate smart agriculture technologies/practices available
4. Introduction to specific crop enterprises for the group
5. Seeds, seed bed preparation, planting, intercropping and weeding
6. Major field pests and diseases of the given crops and their control
7. Soil fertility and water management
8. Post-harvest Handling
9. Business skills
10. Marketing

The sessions were delivered using grain sack charts and practical sessions conducted at the demo sites established. Sessions for mixed refugee groups followed a similar schedule of trainings, while women refugee groups have a somewhat different schedule, due to the focus on household food production. According to post-training assessments filled in by farmer groups, the members generally appreciated the method of delivery of the trainings, the timing and duration. Table 3.1.1.10 provides the total number of groups trained in CSA in 2019. Note that old national farmer groups were not planned to receive CSA training because they were supported under DAR3/RALNUC3

Table 3.1.1.10 Farmer groups trained in good agricultural practices

	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Moyo	Adjumani	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
New	165	75	75	60	0	0	105	105	240	825
Mixed groups	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	48	0	104
Women refugees	64	0	0	0	120	120	0	57	0	361
Total	285	75	75	60	120	120	105	210	240	1290

The attendance of the training sessions was on average between 20 - 25 members per session. The sessions on land opening, planting, weeding, pest and disease control and post-harvest handling had relatively higher attendance. Female group members registered higher attendance rates than their male counterparts. The reason was reportedly that men were more often away from home. Extension staff reported that women were more cooperative and kept time during the trainings. According to attendance records, actual attendance at meetings was almost 75% women to 25% men. In Moyo and Adjumani there were only women refugee groups during this reporting period, which will boost the number of women attending on average. Female refugee groups in Moyo included some male members at the groups' request, giving a total of 279 male members across the 120 women refugee groups.

Establishment of Demonstration plots

CSA training in NURI revolved around a demonstration plot where farmers observe and gain experience with GAP and CSA technologies and practices. The demo garden also functions as a seed multiplication mechanism. During the reporting period, farmer groups, working with extension staff, identified and established a total of 834 out of 825 planned demos. The target was exceeded because in Agago, nine old national farmer groups established demon gardens using own resources. The choice of site for the demo garden venue was based on factors such as accessibility for ease of observation by both group and non-group members, fertility of the soil and safeness from stray animals. Planting and training of the farmer groups was concentrated in the third quarter of the year.

In the refugee settlements (Rhino camp and Palabek), the mixed groups obtained land from the national members in their groups. The identified sites were prepared for planting and training activities prepared for and planned for immediately after the reporting period. It should be noted that accessing an acre for a demo plot was difficult at many sites due to small size of fields, so in most cases the plots were divided into two or more smaller plots. Many groups reported having hired land for demo planting. The number of demo plots established is given in table 3.1.1.11, note that demos are only established by new national farmer and mixed refugee groups. The number does not necessarily correspond to total number of groups trained on CSA.

Table 3.1.1.11 Demonstration plots established

Demo plots	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
Planned	165	75	75	60	105	105	240	825
Planted	165	75	75	60	105	105	249	834

In South West-Nile, demo results showed that sesame, soybeans and beans generally performed well. The yield results for the four districts indicate that for an acre: sesame ranged from 0-280 kgs/acre with an average of 115kgs/acre, soybeans 30-450 kgs/acre with an average of 150kgs/acre, beans 0-1,461 kg/acre with an average of 800kgs/acre, Potatoes 0-2,300 kgs/acre with an average of 900kgs/acre, onions 0-633 kgs/acres with an average of 290kgs/acre and rice 0-1,800 kgs/acre with average of 900kgs/acre. In Zombo district, a number of farmer groups registered zero yields from both demos and individual fields because of the unpredictable weather and persistent rains.

In the Acholi sub-region, the results show varied performance across the three districts. The yield results of the different strategic crops in the region were: soya beans ranged from 0 – 520 Kg/acre with average of 173 Kg/acre, sesame 37 – 456 Kg/acre with average of 133 Kg/acre, and

sunflower 210 – 1,275 Kg/acre with average of 508 Kg/acre. Cassava was not yet ready for harvest at the time of reporting.

In general, the yields were low when compared to research estimates; however, results from the demo fields were higher than individual farmer fields. This is the result of the use of improved seeds in the demo versus farmers use of home saved or local seeds, experienced labour constraint coupled with poor crop management practices.



Fig 1: Intercrop of sesame & Beans as CSA practice (left) and Demo field being planted (right)

Establishment of learning sites for refugee women groups

In Moyo and Adjumani, where NURI implementation started later in the year a number of adjustments were made to the implementation modality to ensure that activities got off the ground during 2019. Only refugee women groups were selected as household gardening activities require less time than field crops, and could be implemented within the time scale. The extension team adopted a model making use of 'learning sites' which were used to demonstrate some CSA practices. These were smaller plots of about 30m by 30m, within a beneficiary's homestead. These sites served the purpose that a demo field should have. All the refugee groups established these learning sites and it is reported that groups appreciated the approach.

Support of farmer groups in collective marketing

The objective of this activity is to enable farmer groups supported under the programme to market their strategic crops at better prices. The major activities accomplished during the year were;

1. selection and training of marketing committees

2. market information collection and dissemination to farmer groups
3. linking farmer groups to buyers and inputs supply
4. bulking and collective marketing of produce

Each NURI implementing unit has a Marketing coordinator with the role of managing and coordinating marketing activities with the support of extension staff and enumerators (periodically recruited in West-Nile). Collective marketing activities had not started in North West-Nile (Moyo, Obongi and Adjumani) during the reporting period, as they were working only with women refugee groups.

Selection and training of Marketing Committees

Production and marketing committees were formed for each of the new farmer groups and for old groups fresh election of committees was encouraged. The AEOs supported the Marketing Coordinator in the selection and formulation of the committees. These committees hold the responsibility of mobilizing the groups for marketing, record keeping and providing information to the group on marketing of group produce.

Unlike in the training sessions, where women dominate, there were more males in the marketing committees compared to females. The groups reported that one of the key roles that the committee members play is looking for produce markets, a role which many women find difficult because of cultural norms and the nature of their domestic role and duties.

Table 3.1.1.12: Number of PMC members selected and trained for marketing activities

PMC members	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
Female	180	155	155	110	335	419	502	1,856
Male	315	310	310	220	346	397	623	2,521
Total	495	465	465	330	681	816	1,125	4,377

Market information collection and dissemination to farmer groups

The farmer groups were helped to monitor price trends for the strategic crops they were supported through the weekly/monthly dissemination of price lists. This is done in order to guide the old groups in marketing their produce while for the new nationals, it was to help them monitor their marketing plans as projected in their PMPs. The Marketing Coordinators worked with selected enumerators, the extension officers and marketing committees. The price lists were displayed on public notice boards within the communities, sent through SMS to farmers/leaders'

phones and sometimes aired during radio talk shows.

Although this dissemination helps the farmers to plan their marketing, it should be noted that prices keep fluctuating which affects decision making by farmers and monitoring their marketing activities. Data collected by Units in the table 3.1.13 and 3.1.14 below show the fluctuations in various commodity process over a period of 6 months.

Table 3.1.1.13: Average Produce price for South West-Nile

Average prices for different strategic crops UGX						
Variety of crops	Months					
	July	August	September	October	November	December
Hulled rice super	4,000	3,500	3,500	3,000	3,000	2,500
Unhulled rice super	2,000	2,000	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Hulled rice nerica	3,000	2,800	2,800	3,000	2,800	3,000
Unhulled rice nerica	2,000	1,300	1,400	1,300	1,300	1,300
Cassava Flour	1,200	1,300	1,200	1,300	1,100	1,200
Dry cassava chips	500	400	400	550	650	500
Fresh cassava	240	271	1,000	-	450	500
Sesame	4,000	3,500	4,000	4,500	3,500	3,300
Yellow Beans	1,500	1,800	2,230	2,300	2,300	2,500
Red Beans	1,500	1,660	2,300	2,500	2,500	2,500
White beans	1,400	1,430	1,500	2,000	2,300	2,200
Black beans	1,300	1,500	1,800	2,200	2,400	2,400
Small size onions	1,500	1,700	2,100	2,200	1,900	1,700
Big size onions	2,000	2,300	2,500	2,600	3,000	3,000
Victoria potato	900	1,100	1,100	950	1,170	1,200
Rwangume potato	900	1,200	1,200	950	1,100	1,200

Table 3.1.1.14: Average Produce price for Acholi sub-region

Average prices for the different strategic crops UGX						
Variety of crops	Months					
	July	August	September	October	November	December
Sesame	5,250	5,250	4,250	3,650	3,650	3,650
Soybeans	3,250	3,250	2,250	1,700	1,800	1,650
Fresh Cassava	650	650	650	650	600	800
Sunflower	700	850	850	850	950	950
Maize	500	500	800	800	1,000	1,000
Beans	2,650	2,750	3,150	3,150	3,250	3,350

Linkage of farmer groups to buyers & inputs suppliers

In order to link farmer groups to commodity buyers and producers of inputs, profiling of major players in the value chain of NURI strategic crops was done. In the Acholi sub-region, they were; Mukwano group of companies, Ngetta Tropical holdings, UOSPA, Mt. Meru for sunflower, Agago dit maize millers, Kalongo investment, Jolah Company limited, Arise and shine maize millers, Gulu Agricultural Development Company (GADCo), Erymaes enterprises and Agri Exim limited.

In West-Nile, they were; GADCo, OLAM Uganda, KAWA, Nile Agro Limited, Global international, GADIC, Dei Cooperative, Lira Rice Association. In Nebbi, development partners like WFP and large hotels bought bulked produce from farmers. The marketing coordinators gather information and keep communications with the various Commodity buyers, acting as a link between farmers and potential buyer. These meetings and linkages have helped to connect progressive farmers to reliable input sources and provided market opportunities for bulked produce. On the other hand, agro-input dealers in districts like Agago, Lamwo and some parts of West-Nile are undeveloped and unresponsive despite efforts from NURI to engage them.

Bulking/collective marketing of produce

NURI famer group members are encouraged to bulk their produce in order to take advantage of price rises commonly experienced. Crops most commonly bulked in West Nile were sesame, beans and rice while in the Acholi sub-region it was sunflower, followed by soybeans and sesame. Maize was marketed to a lesser extent. The farmers groups felt that the price offered by bulk buyers was reasonable when compared to what they would have charged within their local markets.

From South West-Nile, beans, soybeans, rice and potatoes were bulked and marketed in Nebbi, Pakwach and Zombo, with sesame sold from Arua. Onions and cassava where not yet marketed at the time of reporting. In Acholi, all the sunflower marketed was from Agago, while other crops marketed cut across all the three districts. Collective marketing is generally challenging as farmer households face pressing cash needs leading to frequent early, individual sale. It has been confirmed that though it is difficult for farmers to market collective, the benefit in terms of purchase price for produce is noticeable. The purchase price for Beans, Soybeans, Maize and Rice that were marketed collectively was higher than individual price charge in their local markets by between 200 – 500/=. Potatoes was more than double while sesame in Acholi sub-region was higher by 1,788/=. Commodity prices are not the same in all the regions, for instance sesame was sold at a much higher price in Acholi compared to West-Nile although still better than price in the local markets. See table 3.16 and 3.17.

Table 3.1.1.15 Quantity of produce bulked and sold collectively in South West-Nile

S/N	Strategic crop type	Price per Kilo in local market (UGX)	Price per Kilo when bulked (UGX)	Quantity bulked & sold (Kg)	Amount earned (UGX)
1	Beans	2,000	2,386	56,173	134,028,778

			(19% higher)		
2	Soybeans	1,800	2,100 (17% higher)	9,174	19,265,400
3	Rice	1,300	1,550 (19% higher)	10,625	16,468,750
4	Sesame	3,000	3,200 (7% higher)	85,698	274,233,600
5	Potatoes	800	1,700 (113% higher)	8,700	14,790,000

Table 3.1.1.16 Quantity of produce bulked and sold collectively in Acholi sub-region

S/N	Strategic crop type	Price per Kilo in local market (UGX)	Price per Kilo when bulked (UGX)	Quantity bulked & sold (Kg)	Amount earned (UGX)
1	Sunflower	700	900 (29% higher)	1,151,111	1,035,999,900
2	Sesame	3,000	4,788 (60% higher)	200,144	958,289,472
3	Soybeans	1,200	1,637 (36% higher)	202,868	332,094,916
4	Maize	700	1000 (43% higher)	49,433	49,433,000

Multi-stakeholder meetings

As a means of boosting collective marketing activities in the district, multi-stakeholder's meetings were conducted in Acholi sub-region. Issues discussed were access to inputs, collective marketing, regulation and bye-laws and boosting production. The stakeholders agreed to strengthen their community network, build capacity of the cooperatives and government to create enabling environment for the farmers to influence the market. Meetings were attended by district officials (District Production Officer, Principal DCO, District PRELNOR Focal Point Officer,

Operation Wealth Creation Officers, Revenue Focal Point Officers, NURI focal Point officers and District Agricultural Officers), the sub-county officials (SASs, LC III chairpersons and Agric. Officers), development partners, private sector (input/output dealers), farmer representatives (Marketing committees) and NURI staff.

Market survey on preferred varieties of strategic crops

In the Acholi sub-region, a survey on market-preferred varieties of strategic crops was conducted by the marketing coordinators. This also included ascertaining availability of credible seed/inputs suppliers in the implementing districts. The outcome of the survey helped in awareness creation amongst the farmer groups as they prepared their fields for production in the second season. The result of the survey is summarised in the table below:

Table 3.1.1.17 Varietal preference of selected crops in markets in Kitgum, Gulu, Lira and Kampala

Crop	Available in the market	Market Preferred varieties
Sesame	Sesame 1, Sesame 2 & Sesame 3	Sesame 2 & Sesame 3
Soybean	Maksoy 1N; Maksoy 2N; Maksoy 3N; Maksoy 4N; Maksoy 5N Namsoy 3N	Maksoy 3N Maksoy 4N
Sunflower	DK 40-40, Sunfola, PAN 7053, PAN 7057, Other Hybrids: EASF – 2H, AGUARA 6, AGSUN 8251	Sunfola; PAN 7053; PAN 7057 AGSUN 8251
Beans	K 132; Nabe 4; Nabe 15; Nabe 16; Nabe 17; Nabe 19; 'Yellow' bean; Local small-seeded beans	K 132; 'Yellow' bean; Local small-seeded beans

Local Radio Communication

Based on the contracts signed between the implementing partners, RAUs and radio stations, weekly talk shows and spot messages to reinforce NURI programme messages were conducted in the second quarter. The following radio stations run the shows:

- Radio Maria, Nebbi, Pakwach and Zombo (Tuesday 8.30 - 9.15 pm)
- Luo FM, Pader (Thursdays, 7:15 – 8:00 pm)
- Mighty Fire, Kitgum (6:00pm – 7:00pm)
- Radio Pacis, Arua (9:00am – 10:00am)
- Aulogo Media Services and Radio Amani, Adjumani (Tuesday from 8:30pm to 9:30pm)

The radio statements/messages included programme implementation process, the roles of different stakeholders, agronomy of strategic crops, marketing information (markets and price information), group dynamics and VSLA information. 26 talk shows were conducted in Agago, 23 in Kitgum/Lamwo, 13 in Arua and 33 for Nebbi, Zombo, Pakwach districts and 07 in Adjumani. Moyo district had planned to roll out their radio activities in the first quarter of 2020. Activities on

Rural Infrastructure were integrated into the Radio programmes, with alternating topics on CSA and RI in most cases.

Support to Old groups projects

Old farmer groups, groups selected from amongst the RDNUC groups, are supported with market related activities under NURI. Focus is on marketing as well as value addition and post-harvest handling based on the situation and needs of the individual groups. Extension staff worked with the groups to identify “projects” to be supported. Based on the capacity of the groups to plan and implement their activities they were classified into 3 tiers:

- Tier 1: Groups which are engaged in substantial marketing activities building on the earlier support.
- Tier 2: Functional groups, doing at least some level of bulking and other activities together.
- Tier 3: Groups which do not have any substantial group activities and which have progressed only little based on earlier support

All the groups were re-assessed in the third quarter and grouped under the three tiers. The main priority areas of the groups from West-Nile were group stores, production equipment, tarpaulins, seed production and tree planting. In Acholi sub-region the dominant projects were group stores, tarpaulins and improved seeds. Other projects like apiary, oil pressing machines, ox-cart were identified by a few group members. The projects will be implemented in 2020 after viability assessment and approval.

Conduct farmer open days

Farmer Open Days were conducted in all the sub-counties where NURI operates. All groups participated and key stakeholders from the LLG & DLG together with NURI staff attended. Awards were presented to best performing groups during the event. Groups prepared exhibitions to demonstrate their learning and achievements. Groups that received the cash prizes were encouraged to put the money into group production and marketing activities. In Acholi sub-region, the open days were planned for the first quarter of 2020 when harvest was completed.

DEC and Lower Local government (LLG) field monitoring

DEC and LLG monitoring visits are meant to be conducted on a quarterly basis in order to keep both the DLGs/LLGs and NURI partners informed of NURI implementation process and progress. Visits were conducted in the third and fourth quarter, once activities were fully established in the field. The DLGs (DPO, DAO, LC 5 chairpersons) normally select specific sub-counties to go to whereas the LLG (LC 3 chairpersons, Senior Assistant secretaries, Secretary for production and Agricultural officers) monitor all the sub-counties.

The monitoring focused on the implementation of CSA, VSLA and marketing and included the identification of implementation gaps and opportunities to benefit farmer groups. The general feedback is that the program is running well. A key challenge was the poor condition of roads. The teams also proposed that NURI should reach a larger number of groups, include animal traction activities and provide seeds for larger block gardens rather than demonstrations. Detailed monitoring reports are prepared by the district focal point officers and shared with NURI Regional Coordinators.

3.1.2 National FGs, mixed & refugee groups trained in VSLA

The objective of this activity is to improve financial literacy and management of farmer households. This is achieved through integrating financial literacy training into more traditional savings trainings for farmer groups. The major activities during the period were:

- Assessment and selection of farmer groups for VSLA support
- Review of VSLA manual and other documents
- Recruitment and training of CBTs
- CBT training of farmer groups in VSLA methodology
- Training of VSLA staff in SAVIX (VSLA global database)
- Monitoring farmer group savings activities

Assessment and selection of farmer groups for VSLA support

VSLA activities gained momentum in the second quarter of the year after recruitment of the VSLA coordinator. Farmer groups were assessed by VSLA officers with support from the extension staff. Assessment considered groups interest and the level of support from other NGOs or organisations on VSLA. The number of groups selected is summarised below:

Table 3.1.2.1 Number of VSLA groups selected per District for support in 2019

Target group	Arua	Nebbi	Zombo	Pakwach	Kitgum	Lamwo	Agago	Total
Target	140	30	50	20	50	80	70	440
Achieved	73	30	70	45	50	80	70	418

The targeted number of groups was not reached in Arua because of the high number of NGOs and agencies implementing VSLA in the district. This included NURI predecessor RDNUC, which implemented a number of VSLAs across the region.

Preparation of VSLA implementation documents and guides

The guiding documents for implementation of VSLA activities were developed during the period. This included the VSLA training manual, contracting procedures for CBTs, SAVIX system data requirements (VSLA data collection forms) and procurement procedures for VSLA kits. The manual was rolled out to the VSLA staff and was used to guide and standardize the training of CBTs in the third quarter.

Recruitment and training of CBTs

VSLA activities are implemented by Community Based Trainers (CBTs) hired on one-year contracts. The CBTs train, supervise, monitor and collect financial data from the farmer groups. A total of 51 CBTs were recruited across the programme. These were spread out as follows: Arua 9 (6 nationals and 3 refugees), Nebbi 4, Pakwach 5, Zombo 8, Kitgum 7, Agago 8 and Lamwo 10.

The CBTs were taken through a four-day training on the VSLA methodology after which they were provided with bicycles and stationery in order to conduct training of farmer groups.

CBT training of farmer groups in VSLA methodology

Each CBT trains 6-10 farmer groups per savings cycle. The training comprises 7 modules: group formation, general assembly, VSLA concepts, leadership, constitution development, records and conflict management. Reports show an average attendance of 86% for national farmers and 62% for refugees. Attendance varied depending on the agricultural season, with lower attendance during periods of heavy field work for farmers. In the settlements, the refugee households were involved in a number of activities by other development partners which affected their attendance.

Training of VSLA staff in SAVIX (VSLA global database)

NURI subscribes to the SAVIX system which is a global data system that is used for VSLA data storage and processing. All the VSLA staff were trained on how to use the system. Data and quantitative reports for VSLA are generated from the SAVIX system which has worked well in the first year of implementation.

Monitoring farmer group savings activities

During 2019 most farmer groups started saving in October after going through the initial training sessions and receiving VSLA kits including savings books and safe boxes. There was some delay in start up of activities as the modalities for contracting CBTs raised a number of legal issues.. During the start-up phase, prior to savings, members set personal savings goals, using the concept of 'saving for a purpose'.

In the reporting period farmers in West-Nile saved over 59 million UGX (43,5 mill UGX Arua, 5,2 mill UGX Nebbi, 4 mill UGX Pakwach and 6,3 mill UGX Zombo) in the main savings account with

an average share value of 1000 UGX per member per week. The value of savings by female members was 33,5 mill UGX, 10 mill UGX was saved by youth and in the settlement the refugees saved 8,7 mill UGX.

In the Acholi sub-region, overall savings for the three districts was 96 million UGX (26,4 mill UGX Kitgum, 36,2 mill UGX Lamwo & 33,4 mill UGX Agago) in the main savings account with an average share value of 1000 UGX per member per week. From this overall, women saved 40,3 mill UGX, youth 15,9 mill UGX and refugees 2,6 mill UGX.

VSLA savings provide financial safety nets VSLA farmers, reducing the risk of selling off productive assets during emergencies. Besides the main savings, group members save for emergencies in a 'Welfare fund'. This fund acts as an insurance for the farmers and purposes for which the fund, which is more easily accessible, may be used is stipulated in their constitution of each group. By the end of 2019 farmers saved 10,5 mill UGX in social funds from West-Nile and 13,7 mill in Acholi. Social funds were mainly used to pay for school fees and medical expenses.

To enable farmers increase their production and productivity, proper post harvest handling and access to markets, financial access is key. This enables farmers to acquire inputs, purchase/hire land, hire labour, hire storage facility, purchase assets etc. From the savings, farmers in West-Nile were able to cumulatively access borrowings of 52,5 mill UGX (43,1 mill UGX Arua, 5,2 mill UGX Nebbi, 4,3 mill UGX Pakwach and 5,7 mill UGX Zombo) an average interest rate of 10% per month. In Acholi, farmers cumulatively borrowed 70 mill UGX (23,1 mill UGX Kitgum, 25,4 mill UGX Lamwo & 21,2 mill UGX Agago) from the groups. The loan fund utilisation rate is at 70% across the programme and percentage of members with loans outstanding at approximately 45%. The major reasons for borrowing included agriculture, small scale business and payment of school fees. As savings only stated in October this ratio is expected to increase with time.

3.1.3 Capacity of IP/RAU staff built

The objective of this activity is to build the capacity of NURI staff to meet the objectives of the programme. Beyond this, building the capacity of extension officers who will go on to jobs in other organisations or in the government of Uganda is seen as an objective in itself.

As well as regular on-the-job training and mentoring within each of the Implementing Units, NURI CF organised a number of specialised trainings for staff, including representatives from DLGs where relevant. Major trainings carried out during the reporting period are highlighted below:

a) Orientation and introduction of all staff as they joined NURI, 12-14/2/2019, Acholi Inn in Gulu: This session involved the entire NURI workforce from South West-Nile & Acholi sub region. North West-Nile was done in the third quarter as the operation in that region started in the second quarter. The staff were taken through NURI policies, operation/implementation guidelines and

other start-up roles and responsibilities. This training included farmer group assessment and selection since the team was to perform these tasks immediately after the trainings.

b) Training on preparation of Production and Marketing plans for all extension staff, 27-31/5/19, Acholi Inn in Gulu. This was done for NURI staff from South West-Nile and Acholi sub region who were working with old and new national farmer groups. The aim was to enable the extension team guide farmer groups in developing realistic and achievable plans for their production.

c) Climate Smart Agriculture and good agricultural practices for all extension staff from all the districts of implementation (AEOs, AES, Marketing Coordinators and all Coordinators and managers), 24-28/6/19, Acholi Inn in Gulu. The training aimed at building staff knowledge on CSA and good agricultural practices for strategic crops, community extension approaches and imparting practical skills. The DPOs from the districts of implementation also attended to enable them effectively monitor CSA activities in the field.

d) VSLA methodology and principles for all VSLA staff from the implementing districts, 24-28/6/2019 in Acholi Inn, Gulu. This targeted staff from South West-Nile and Acholi sub-region who had rolled out VSLA during the year. The objective of the training was to equip and refresh the VSLA staff on the methodology promoted by the programme and enable them to roll out the activities. This was later followed by a training on SAVIX which is a global VSLA information system used to capture all VSLA activities in a database (membership, savings, loans etc)

e) Capacity building on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) by CARE, all NURI staff in districts covered by the WAY programme were trained in the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2019. The NURI staff were trained together with key DLG staff (DPO, CAO, DHO). NURI staff were enlightened about their roles and responsibilities and enabled them make some referrals during the course of implementation.

f) Capacity building on Post-harvest-handling (PHH): The training was conducted in the last quarter of 2019 (November) at Acholi Inn in Gulu. The training targeted all AEOs, AES, Coordinators from South West-Nile and Acholi sub-region. The objective was to enable the extension team train farmer groups on PHH to avoid losses during and after harvest.

g) Quick Books Online for Accountants: The accounting system for NURI is quick books online. During the reporting period the accountants with IPs and RAUs were trained on the application and use of quick books online. The training was organised by the NURI CF finance department.

h) Defensive riding skills: All NURI CSA staffs from the implementing districts were trained in defensive riding skills by Auto Mobile Association of Uganda in the 3rd quarter of 2019. This enabled the extension team improve on their riding skills as they delivered extension services to the communities.

i) Capacity building on M&E: All the staff involved in the implementation of CSA attended a two days training in M&E in the last quarter of 2019. The training was decentralised within the RAUs and Implementing partner offices. The model provided smaller training groups and provided better engagement of the participants. The objective of the training was to make the staff aware of their M&E roles, M&E reporting needs and M&E data collection. The training plan for North West-Nile was moved to the first quarter of 2020.

j) Team building was organised in December for all CSA staff attached to the implementing partners and RAU. Each unit and implementing partner developed their team building plan which was approved by NURI CF and later implemented. The activities were combined with learning visits to established commercial farms in Acholi (Nwoya/Amuru) and Masindi area.

k) Staff attending Danida Fellowship Courses: NURI CF coordinated and facilitated eight NURI staff to attend capacity building courses in Denmark in partnership with DFC as listed below:

- Increased performance through strategic leadership and change management Course – Jan 2019, Robert Bakyalire PM AFARD.
- Public finance Management and Good governance course – February 2019 Oyirwoth Owacgui- Accountant AFARD
- Green growth, climate change, Environment and sustainability Course - April 2019 Ongom Davidson Nyamutoro Sophie Edaku David, Amviko Faima Ogena Francis (AES from IPs and RAUs).
- Entrepreneurship, Innovation and value chain course –May 2019: Abola Sam (RAU Agago).

3.1.4 Capacity of DLG built (Production Department)

The objective of this activity is to build the implementation capacity of the production department to ensure that development activities which are important for rural livelihoods are implemented in an effective and efficient manner.

During the reporting period, a back-log of unaccomplished procurement and training activities from RDNUC and planning activities for NURI procurement were done.

Activities carried forward from RDNUC included:

1. Procurement and delivery of 4 water testing kits to Arua, Nebbi, Zombo and Lamwo DLG
2. Procurement and delivery of soil thermometer to Nebbi DLG
3. Fisheries Officer for Pakwach DLG completed a short training course on Induced Fish Breeding and Fish feed formulation

4. Research and tuition fees for District Commercial Officer for Nebbi DLG was paid and his study process monitored.

DCB activities in NURI commenced with up-dating operational guidelines from NURI, adjusting for the goals of NURI in terms of CSA, as well as integrating lessons from RDNUC.

The total budget allocation for District Local Government Capacity Building funds is 5,000,000 DKK for Climate Smart Agriculture.

NURI CF team worked with a consultancy company to support and guide each district in developing their individual plans for procurement for relevant equipment as well as a capacity building of staff in the Production Department. The funds were split so that the new districts of Moyo, Adjumani, Obongi, Madi-Okolo and Pakwach received a higher allocation for retooling, career and skills development whereas the old districts of Arua, Nebbi, Zombo, Kitgum, Agago and Lamwo, all of whom had received significant capacity building support under RDNUC, received grants for career and skills development only.

District-level sensitization meetings were carried followed by a number of meetings where each district was guided on capacity building plan development including guidelines for which items and courses are eligible for funding under NURI. The most common items for retooling were motor vehicles and motorcycles, ICT equipment, artificial insemination kits, moisture meters, microscopes and office furniture.

Under career training and skills development, masters, post graduate and diploma studies dominated the plans. Such courses included Livestock Development and Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Project Planning and Management, Parasitology and Entomology, and short courses in Artificial Insemination and Training in CSA.

3.1.5 Sensitize farmer groups on SRHR & GBV issues (UNFPAs WAY programme)

During the reporting period, CARE which is the implementing partner selected by UNFPA for this output of the WAY programme, conducted a five days training for CSA staff in ARUDIFA, RAU Kitgum/Lamwo, RAU Agago, RAU Moyo and Adjumani. The content of the training included gender concepts, gender-based violence, SRHR in relation to agriculture (safe motherhood, family planning & STIs) among others. The participants included all field and management staff involved in the implementing of NURI activities as well as representatives from NGOs working in similar activities and a team from DLGs comprising of Chief Administrative Officer, District Agricultural Officer, District Production Officer, District Community Development Officer, the District Commercial and Marketing Officer and Senior Assistant Secretaries from all sub-counties. District Community Development Officers acted as co-facilitators of some sessions. Following the training, extension staff were issued with training materials, and were encouraged to link farmer groups to SRHR services, which are strengthened under other components of the WAY programme. Funding for this activity is not channelled through NURI, but via UNFPA to the various implementing partners, including CARE.

3.2 Output 2: Rural Infrastructure

The objective of this intervention is to improve the agricultural related infrastructure using a labour-intensive approach. This is expected to facilitate and support increased agricultural production and marketing through improved access to local retail and bulk markets.

The contracting of the implementing partner for this intervention was completed in the second quarter of the year. Inception and planning activities were accomplished during 2019.

3.2.1 Prioritized Infrastructure Investment Plans Approved

The inception and project investment planning activities are outlined as:

1. Orientation of DRC staff into NURI programme
2. Signing of Memorandum of understanding with the districts
3. Review of rural infrastructure manual
4. Inception and implementation workplans and budgets developed
5. District, sub-county and settlement sensitization meetings
6. Establishment of DRC offices
7. Formation of Parish Development Committees
8. Revalidation of Parish Development Plans

Orientation of DRC staff into NURI programme

Key staff reported in May 2019 to the DRC Kampala office. The key staff were taken through DRC Policies, financial and procurement procedures and DRC Dynamics. The newly recruited staff developed work plans, budgets, procurement plans, HR plan, risk register and schedule for opening and closing of NURI offices.

DRC recruited and, in some cases, recalled RDNUC staff, to kick-start NURI inception activities in Arua, Nebbi, Kitgum, Lamwo and Rhino camp settlement. After recruitment and orientation of staff, staff were introduced to relevant stakeholders. These were NURI-CF Regional Coordinators, LCV, CAO, RDC and NURI District Focal Point Officers in the district where they were posted.

Inception activities

These were reported more fully in a separate Inception report covering May to July, but included signing of Memoranda of Understanding between DRC and the various districts, on-going review of the Rural Infrastructure manual used in the previous programme, with attention paid to designs, quantity, inclusion of resilience design and comments from past assessments and audit reports. As inception activities were ongoing development of work plans, budgets and procurement plans for the period August to December 2019 was completed and approval.

District Inception Meetings

District Inception meetings were held in five districts, Arua, Nebbi, Adjumani, Kitgum, Lamwo and Agago. NURI CF and representatives from the CSA Implementing units shared the platform, with CF Regional Coordinators facilitating at several of the District level meetings. The participants included; District Resident Commissioner, Chief Administrative Officer, LCV Chairman, Deputy Local Council V Chairperson, District Production Officer, District Environment Officer, District Fisheries Officer, District Water Officer, District Engineering team, District Focal Point Officer NURI, DLC councillors from the various Sub-Counties, Sub-County chiefs, LCIII Chairpersons, Community Development Officers, OPM representative from the relevant refugee settlements and Refugee Welfare Committee leaders.

During the sensitization meetings in West-Nile, issues raised included;

- Concerns were raised by Councils in areas with town council boards on why Town Councils were not included in the planning. NURI CF clarified that Town Councils are not included in the programme design.
- Request for support for new administrative units at lower local Government such as new Sub-Counties. NURI CF clarified that new sub-counties are included as the programme covers the entire district.
- Request that quality control of infrastructure should ensure long-term sustainability. NURI CF confirmed that there will be quality control on all projects.
- Monitoring of project shouldn't be restricted to only the DEC and Technical team but to include councillors. NURI CF clarified the monitoring plans budgeted in the programme document.

During the sensitization in Acholi sub-region, key issues raised include;

- Recommendation to draw lessons from RDNUC that will help the district to do better under NURI Programme. NURI CF ensured that lessons learnt have been integrated into the design of NURI programme.
- Agree the need for better partnership and collaboration to ensure DEC and the technical wing monitor this programme and effectively communicate key concerns to the implementing partners and NURI CF as relevant.
- The issue of refugees in Lamwo district was highlighted with concerns for partners to also consider equally and proportionality allocating funding to all the three Palabek Sub Counties, since they all host refugees. i.e. Palabek Ogili, Palabek Kal, Palabek Gem. CF explained that NURI resources are allocated depending on population of nationals and refugees.

- Recommendation for building synergies with other partners such as Goal in supporting farmers in value chain additions to their produce.
- Issue of quality of infrastructure facilities and the aspect of sustainability was raised. CF explained the roles of the different stakeholders in maintaining infrastructure.
- The district emphasized that they have machines under the department of works and production that DRC can borrow for infrastructure projects to ensure quality work.

Sub county sensitization meetings:

Sub county sensitization meetings were carried out in the following districts: Arua, Nebbi, Adjumani, Kitgum and Lamwo.

Table 3.2.1.1 Number of participants who attended Sub county sensitization meetings

District	No. of sub-counties	Males	Females	Total
Arua	26	612	166	778
Nebbi	8	180	44	224
Adjumani	9	334	128	462
Kitgum	9	160	59	219
Lamwo	2	28	9	37
Total	54	1,314	406	1,720

In total 1,720 participants attended sub county sensitization meetings. Invited participants included Sub county chiefs, LC III Chairpersons, Community Development Officers, parish chiefs, Parish Development Committee members, sub county extension staff, women representatives, youth representatives, opinion and religious leaders from various sub counties.

The sensitization meetings were conducted in partnership with NURI CSA Implementing Units, to inform the LLGs officials about the NURI programme and enable key sub-county stakeholders to understand and appreciate their roles and responsibilities in implementation.

Settlement sensitization meetings:

In 2019 three refugee settlements began implementation of RI activities namely Rhino camp, selected settlements in Adjumani and Palabek settlement. The settlement meetings were attended by host communities, refugees and refugee leaders. See the breakdown in table 3.2.1.2 below:

Table 3.2.1.2 Participants during settlement sensitization Meetings

District	Settlement	Male	Female	Total
Arua	Rhino camp	215	128	343
Adjumani	Adjumani	44	30	74
Lamwo	Palabek	55	21	76
		314	179	493

In total 493 participants attended settlement sensitization meetings in three settlements: Rhino camp, Adjumani and Palabek. The meetings were attended by sub county Chiefs, LCIII chairpersons, CDOs from refugee hosting sub counties, RWC III, RWC II, RWC I of the various settlements who are to act as ambassadors of NURI to ensure ownership and sustainability from the initial stages. The sensitization was conducted in partnership with various stakeholders; districts, sub counties and CSA Implementing Units staff. The main objective of sensitization meetings was to inform stakeholders about the NURI program and inform stakeholders of their roles and responsibilities in the implementation.

Establishment of offices:

DRC was, according to the scope of services of the contract, to open program headquarters in Arua, 3 regional offices and 13 field offices. During the reporting period the following offices have been opened. The headquarters office was opened in DRC Arua Area office; three regional offices were opened in Arua, Adjumani and Kitgum. The field offices were reduced from 13 to 10 to rationalize overhead costs. Six out of ten field offices were opened in 2019 i.e. Arua, Rhino camp, Nebbi, Adjumani, Lamwo and Kitgum. The remaining four field offices; Moyo, Palorinya, Zombo and Agago are planned for January 2020. In discussion with NURI CF, DRC adopted a phased approach to allow for smooth office establishments and programme implementation. In some cases, equipment from RDNUC was mobilized to ensure fast establishment of running offices.

Formation of Parish Development Committees (PDCs)

As RI activities rolled out it was found that Parish Development Committees (PDCs) exist in most districts, but not always with the prescribed membership. NURI staff engaged the CAOs and District Planners to harmonize the number of members and composition of PDCs across the NURI districts.

DRC working with sub-county officials, established and/or reconstituted PDCs in all the parishes in the six districts of Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Adjumani, Lamwo and Kitgum. The PDCs comprise

of approximately 25 members, with 9 executives. However, in refugee hosting sub counties the PDCs were expanded to 50 members with 18 executives in order to accommodate refugees. The composition includes; Local council 2 (LC II) at parish level as chairperson, Parish chief as the secretary, as well as representatives from the following categories; elders, youths, both male and female, retired civil servants, women representative, persons with disability and councillors and Local Council 1 of respective villages. The PDCs actively participated in prioritization, selection and revalidation of Parish Development Plans.

Revalidation of Parish Development Plans (PDPs)

310 Parish Development Plans were revalidated in 54 sub counties. The breakdown is indicated in the table below.

Table 3.2.1.3. Number of revalidated Parish Development Plans

District	Number of sub-counties covered	Number of Parishes	Number of revalidated Parish Development Plans	Remarks
Kitgum	9	45	45	All done
Lamwo	2	9	9	Refugee hosting Sub-counties
Adjumani	9	51	51	All done
Arua	26	161	161	All done
Nebbi	8	44	44	All done
Total	54	310	310	

NB: Arua figures includes the new district of Madi-Okollo

The planning process was bottom up, involving all stakeholders. This involved development of village proposals, prioritization and selection of priorities by the PDCs. The staff distributed planning sheets/templates provided by the district planning departments to all villages and parishes. DRC provided district planning departments in-kind support e.g. stationaries, printing of village proposal sheets, parish and sub county prioritization sheets for all the sub counties. These tools supported the districts in conducting village, parish and sub county planning activities.

The planning process was conducted with participation of sub county chiefs, Community Development Officers (CDOs) and parish chiefs. The CDOs supported with compiling and typing of revalidated parish development plans.

Parish plans revalidation meetings were held in all the parishes of Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Kitgum, and Adjumani districts. In Lamwo district, parish revalidation plans were done in refugee hosting sub counties i.e. Palabek Ogili and Gem Sub counties. The sub-county chiefs, Community Development Officers (CDOs) and parish chiefs were facilitated with fuel and SDA.

The CAOs, district planners and sub-county chiefs were very grateful with the support from NURI during the planning process. The district and sub county officials noted that NURI has enabled them expedite the planning process and made planning transparent, participatory and inclusive at a time when according to Government processes, up-dating of plans was required, but resources were lacking.

3.2.2 Approved Infrastructure Projects Implemented

Prioritization and selection of projects at the Sub Counties.

This process was conducted with technical support from the Planning offices and the sub-county technical planning committees. Sub-counties identified key priorities from the Parish Development Plans within NURI project scope of works. From these priorities, DRC and stakeholders agreed priority projects for screening and costing.

Screening and costing of prioritized Projects

Screening of selected projects was conducted together with the district technical teams. Several prioritized projects were screened and costed. These projects included; community access roads, woodlots, springs, markets and water ponds for livestock. Upon screening by the District technical teams and DRC, BoQs were prepared and costed.

Preparation and Approval of Investment Plans

Six investment plans were presented to the District Technical Planning Committees in December 2019 for discussion and approval. All the investment plans were approved, and details are shown in table 3.2.2.1 below.

Table 3.2.2.1. Types and numbers of approved budget

District	CARs (Kms)	Markets	Woodlots	Water ponds	Springs	Total No.	Budget 2020 (mill UGX)
Arua	94.7	3	54	1	28	183	3.146
Kitgum	18.2	1	23	1	0	43	0.527
Nebbi	28.5	1	35	2	6	70	1.105
Madi-Okollo	56.1	1	40	1	7	78	1.395

District	CARs (Kms)	Markets	Woodlots	Water ponds	Springs	Total No.	Budget 2020 (mill UGX)
Lamwo	18.5	0	10	0	0	28	0.427
Adjumani	50.1	0	27	0	2	79	0.789
Total	266.1	6	189	5	43	481	5.073

Budget excludes contingencies and DLG funds

Table 3.2.2.2: Details of CARs in Investment Plans for 2020

District	CARs (Kms)	Budget Mill UGX	Price per km UGX	Percentage of district budget
Arua	94.7	2.122	22,406,127	67
Kitgum	18.2	0.246	13,501,527	47
Nebbi	28.5	0.603	21,163,294	55
Madi-Okollo	56.1	0.887	15,804,034	64
Lamwo	18.5	0.427	23,043,735	79
Adjumani	50.1	0.789	15,754,715	71
Total	266.1	5.074	19,064,742	65

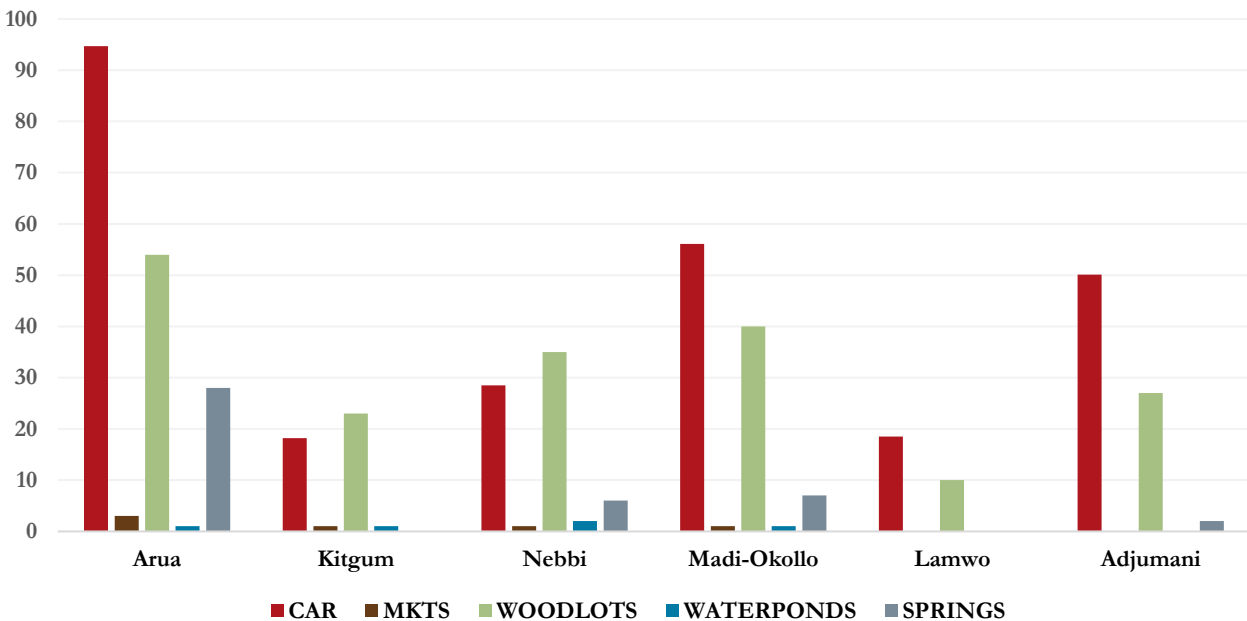
In total 481 projects were approved in six districts: Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Adjumani, Lamwo and Kitgum. The breakdown of approved projects is as follows: Community access roads 266.14 KMs, markets 6, woodlots 189, water ponds 5 and protected springs 43.

The cost of community access roads varied in the six districts. The most expensive community access roads were in Lamwo district with average cost of UGX 23,043,735 per Km. This was due to bottlenecks for instance swamps and valleys in Palabek Ogili and Gem sub counties. Lamwo 2020 Investment Plan only covers the two refugee hosting sub counties.

Arua community access roads are the second most expensive, costing an average of UGX 22,406,127 per Km. Arua district also has valleys and swamps. Kitgum had the cheapest roads with an average cost of UGX 13,501,537 per Km. The overall average cost for construction of community access roads across the six districts was UGX 19,064,742.55 per Km.

The graph below shows the number of approved projects by type in the six districts;

PROJECTS 2020



From the above graph, it is evident that a majority of projects are community access roads and woodlots. All woodlot projects were prioritized for implementation in season A, 2020. This will enable project staff to monitor woodlots for a longer period.

Observations by the District Technical Planning Committees (DTPC) Members

During presentation and discussions of Investment Plans, the DTPC members noted the following;

Arua

- The district requested to have regular progress reports of the project.
- The sub-counties requested to better understand the mechanism for allocation of budget to sub-counties.

Nebbi

- District authorities requested DRC and Water department to carry out a detailed assessment of water for livestock before implementation of water pond projects in Atego and Nyaravur sub-counties, to ensure current designs meet need.
- The District Executive Committee (DEC) requested to be involved in ground breaking ceremonies.
- One community access road in Goli sub county, was removed after assessment as its location was found to not to cover any real need.

Adjumani

- The DTPC requested woodlot size be standardized to either 2 or 3 acres.
- Gender equality and other cross cutting issues (HIV/ Aids, Child labour) should be considered during implementation of projects.

- Under water resource management water for agriculture should be considered.

Lamwo District

- Suggest district sector experts should present the investment plans to encourage ownership.
- Encouraged closely collaboration with technical departments in implementation.
- LC V and CAO Lamwo appreciated DRC's work and efforts in supporting the district and pledged to support with road works equipment any time requested.

Kitgum District

- Encouraged prioritization of strategic roads and upgraded existing earth road to marram, rather than opening new roads.
- Reminded that all proposed roads should be approved by works department and works and technical committee.
- To avoid failures, markets should be planed and positions in consultations with the community.
- Proposed incorporate fruit trees in the woodlots to support the government school feeding program. Also, indigenous trees.
- Requested avoiding potential land conflict areas when selecting sites for water ponds.
- Any environmental impact assessments should be shared with environment office
- The district will ensure coordination with other projects to avoid duplication of projects.
- Trees planted along roads should be within homes, rather than road reserves to encourage maintenance.
- Technicians (masons) in the district should be considered for employment.

Group formation for Public Works

Because of delay in completion and approval of Investment Plans, group formation was not completed in 2019. A majority of the districts will carry out this activity in January 2020. However, in Kitgum district, community groups were formed in the sub-counties of Amida, Layamo and Mucwini.

During the mobilization of the groups, DRC ensured that the criteria for identification of participants was followed in targeting youth from age group 18 -28yrs and gender equality of 50% female and male representation in each of the formed community groups. Overall, the turn up during mobilization was good, with majority of women and youth showing interest to be selected.

In institutions such as schools & health centres where woodlots will be established, School Management Committees and Health Management Committees were part of the stakeholders. The number of groups formed for public works is given in table 3.2.2.3 below:

Table 3.2.2.3. Groups formed for Public works

Sub County	No. of Groups	Participants		Youths -18 - 28 yrs		Other 29yrs - Above		Total per S/C
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Layamo	7	99	111	50	58	49	53	210
Amida	7	97	113	42	66	55	47	210
Mucwini	10	149	151	76	80	65	79	300
	24	345	375	168	204	169	179	720

In the 3 sub counties of Amida, Layamo and Mucwini groups were formed from the communities living near the project sites. 96 Project Management Committee (PMC) members were elected from the 24 groups. PMCs will provide guidance and leadership to the groups. The PMCs will be trained by project and district technical staff.

3.2.3 DLG Capacity (engineering department) built

Implementation of DLG capacity building activities started in the last quarter of the year. The key activities accomplished are highlighted below:

1. Completed procurement activities from RDNUC which closed in 2018
2. Developed the capacity building plan for the engineering department
3. Conducted sensitization meetings with the DLGs who were guided on plan development, items like motor vehicles, motor cycles, ICT equipment, road construction equipment, GPS machine, borehole cameras, road survey equipment, office furniture and solar panels.
4. The DCB Operational guidelines were revised to fit in the NURI programme, age limits for career & skills development and retooling equipment were made to fit into NURI
5. The new districts received higher funds for retooling and skills development whereas the old districts received a lower amount basically meant for skills development.
6. Under Career training and skills development, master programmes and post graduate diplomas dominated the plan. The courses included Management, Mechanical Engineering, Construction Management, Building and Civil Engineering and short courses in training in designs of roads and Bridges and Training in Heavy Plant Equipment Machinery.

3.3 Output 3: Water Resource Management

This intervention aims to improve the enabling environment for smallholder farming by increasing water availability, reducing the impact of climate change and extreme weather events, and countering environmental degradation, leading to improved yields and decreased incidents of crop failure. The implementation is done by Upper Nile Water Management Zone under Ministry of Water and environment (planning and monitoring) together with Danish Refugee Council (infrastructure). Activities under this intervention started in July 2018.

3.3.1 Develop micro-catchment plans

Under this output, the following activities were implemented during the reporting period:

- Selection of micro-catchments
- Micro-catchment verification and familiarization
- Project introduction to districts

Selection of micro-catchments

For the identification of the micro catchments selection criteria were developed and used to guide the process. These were formulated with regard to the identification of project beneficiary areas as well as other considerations as proposed by DWRM/UNWMZ. Criteria included:

- Geographical area should be water deficient, or predicted to become so, and/or environmentally degraded
- Micro catchment must be within NURI area of operation
- Some of the selected micro catchments should include refugee settlements
- Level of criticality regarding strategic issues (water for people, water for production, water for energy, and water for environment) identified for the covering sub-catchment. Sub catchments found with the highest criticality in strategic issues were given priority
- Area of the micro catchment around 100 km²
- Strategic location along the main river of that sub-catchment

Following the implementation of the above selection criteria and considerations, three micro catchments were selected for implementation of project activities in the first year were:

Yelula micro catchment is within Enyau sub-catchment (Arua district), which has a negative hydrological balance, and hosts refugee settlements within its boundaries

Both Ora (Zombo district) and Nyamrwodo (Nebbi district) micro catchments are within Ora sub-catchment, which has no negative hydrological balance, but degraded areas are observed. The micro-catchments identified are considered to be in a strategic location.

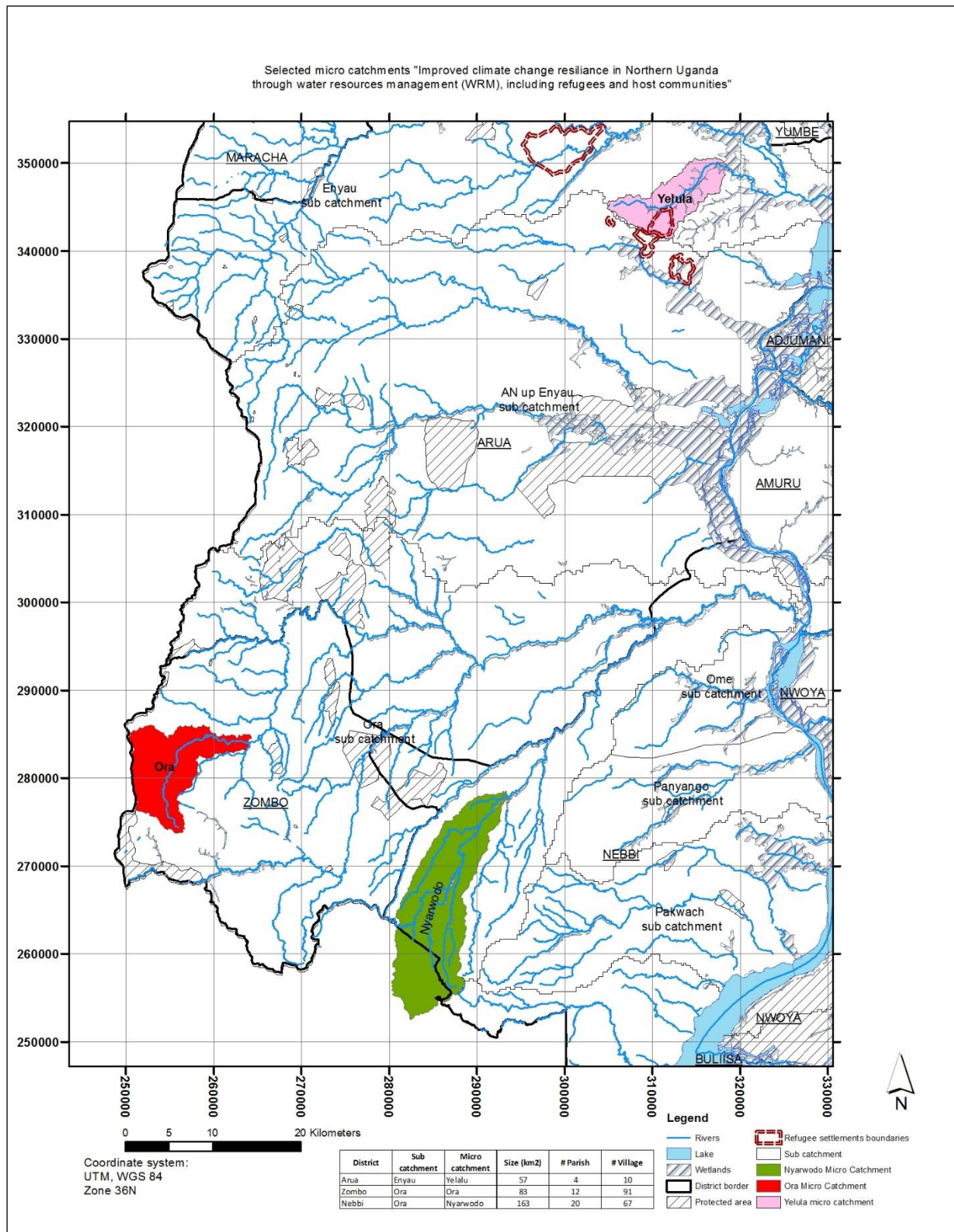


Fig.1 Selected micro catchments for project implementation in year 1.

The same selection criteria were applied or the selection of the four micro catchments for project implementation in the second year. However, to ensure equity in the distribution of beneficiary project districts was also applied. This consideration was undertaken to ensure most of the project districts benefit from the project interventions. Therefore, districts that had micro catchments selected in the first year i.e Arua, Nebbi and Zombo were not eligible for consideration in the selection of micro catchments in the second year.

The four new micro catchments selected were: Ogwapoke micro catchment in Kitgum district, Nyivura micro catchment in Adjumani district, Iboa micro catchment in Moyo district and Abongo micro catchment in Packwach district. All the new micro catchments were selected from West Nile because the region has more negative water balances and higher criticality of strategic water resources whereas the Acholi sub-region has an on-going or already similar water resources management interventions lying within Aswa catchment under the World Bank funded integrated water management and Development project and the EURECCCA project funded by the adaptation Fund.

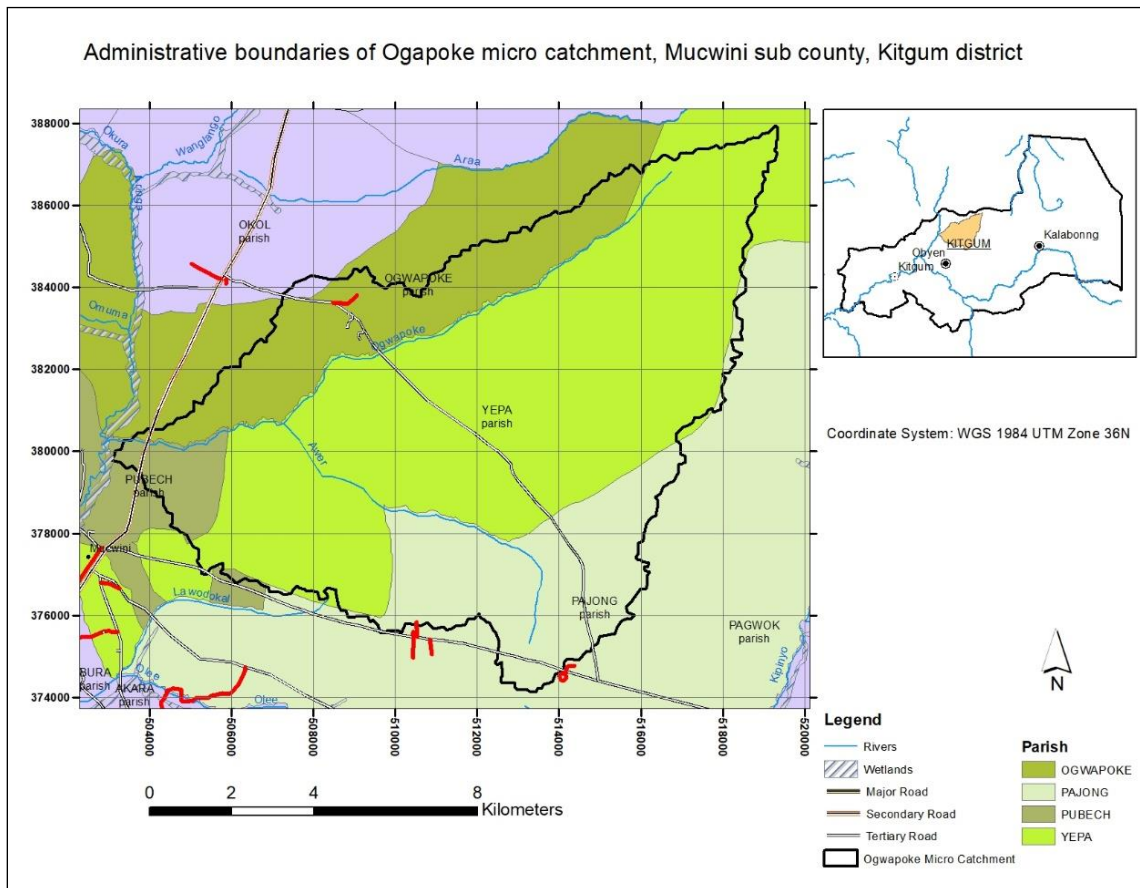


Fig. 2: Ogwapoke micro catchment, Kitgum district

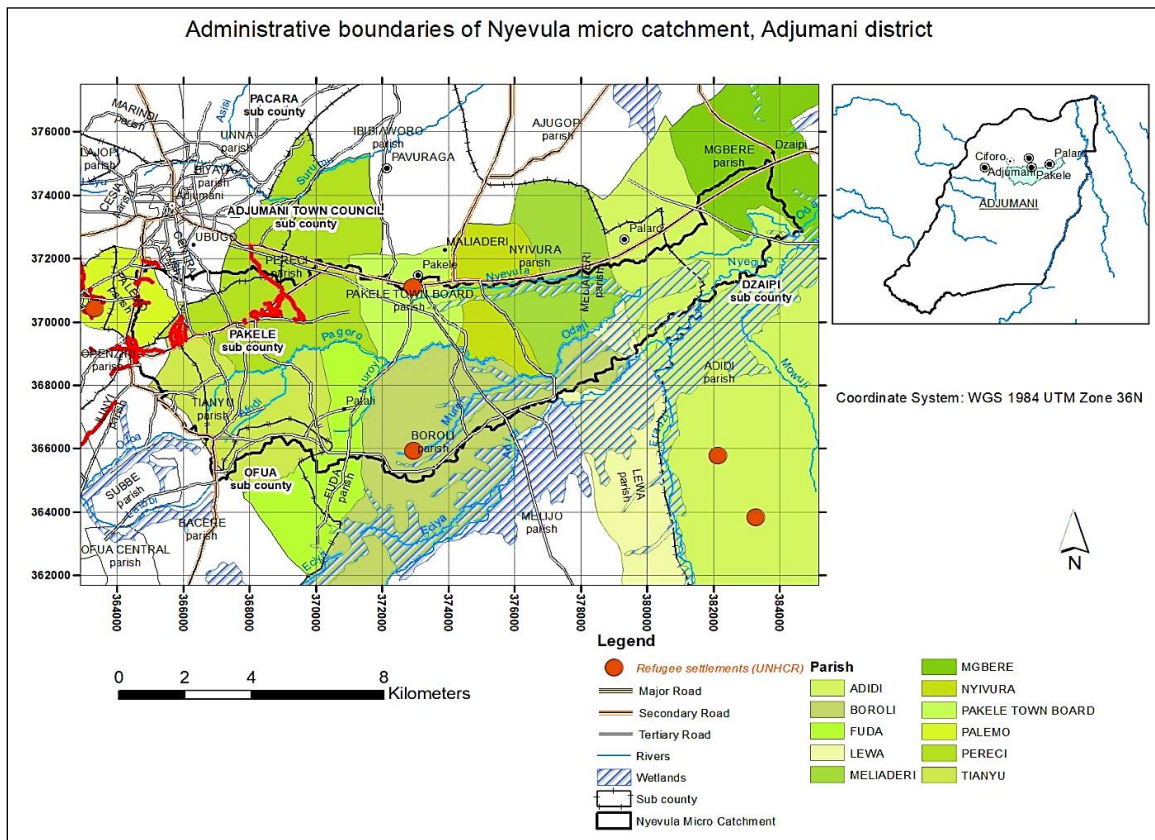


Fig.3: Nyivura micro catchment, Adjumani district

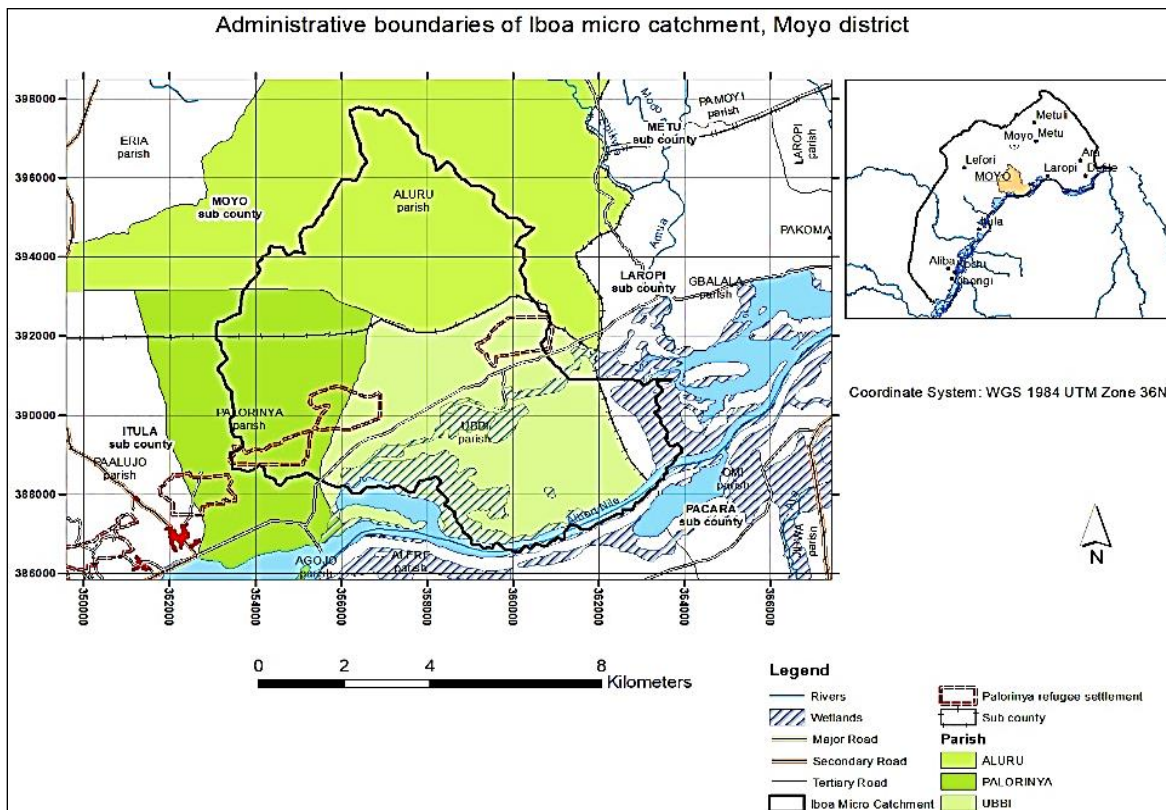


Fig.4: Iboa micro catchment, Moyo district

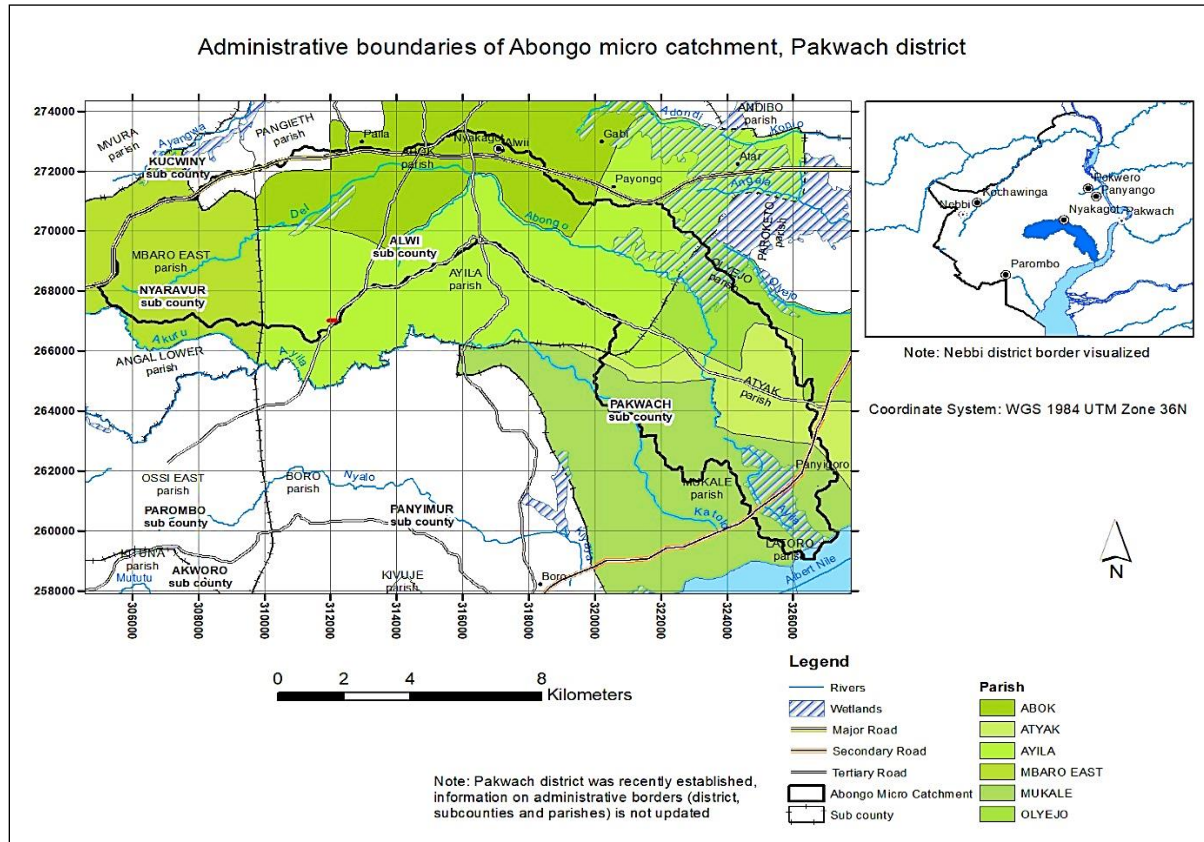


Fig.5: Abongo micro catchment, Pakwach district

Delineation of these micro catchments was based on a Digital Elevation Model with a cell size of 30 x 30 metres. Flow direction and accumulation was determined using GIS tools. Finally, an iterative process of identifying streams and micro catchments was put in place to achieve the required size for micro catchments.

Micro-catchment verification and familiarization

The UNWMZ teams undertook field reconnaissance visits to the selected micro catchments in order to verify, familiarize and appraise themselves with the selected project areas. This activity was undertaken between 23rd to 30th April 2019 and culminated in the acquisition of preliminary baseline information on the water and related resources issues in the micro catchments. These will be finalized in the consultants reports at the end of the phase of developing Micro-catchment plans.

The overall objective of these field visits was to develop a picture of the broader context in which the NURI will operate, analyse socio-economic issues, water and other related resources issues

and identify and map some key stakeholders/partners in the selected micro-catchments with specific focus to:

- 1) Describing the current state and condition of people and ecosystems in the project area
- 2) Identifying the status and conditions of water and other related resources (wetlands, forests landscapes) in the selected micro-catchments
- 3) Determining and describing the pressures being exerted on the environment and other related resources by human activities and the underlying forces driving the pressures.
- 4) Identifying key stakeholders, including key institutions/organizations working on or involved with the selected issues

To achieve the study objectives, approaches included; consultative meetings with stakeholders using guiding questionnaires for the numerous sub counties and parishes and resource mapping among others; and use of GPS & ArcGIS tools and software to produce delineated base maps.

The findings indicate the micro catchments are host to a variety of traditional livelihood systems that depend on water and related resources. The key systems include pastoralism and crop farming under rain-fed agriculture in Nyamwodo and Ora while Yelula is mostly crop farming.

The findings from the field reconnaissance indicate that catchment areas face both man-made and natural challenges which should be considered as activities are rolled out. Details are included in the MWE progress report for the period.

Project introduction to districts

Following the approval of the project work plan and budget for the financial year 2018/2019 by the project steering committee and the subsequent release of project funds to the operational account in March 2019, implementation of activities is ongoing. Political and technical leadership in the beneficiary districts were introduced to the project and planned activities.

A field mission was undertaken between 14th-18th April 2019 by teams from UNWMZ. At district level, CAO and LC5 were briefed about the project, as well as key technical staff that included the District Natural Resources Officer, Environment Officer, Water Officer and Community Development Officer. As much as possible, entry into any district was through a Catchment Management Committee member from the district.

In all the districts, a technical focal person was also assigned to guide the UNWMZ team during its field engagements. Field visits consisted of a meeting at sub county level, where in several cases also parish chiefs and councillors were present. After providing information about the project, a general discussion took place about the status of the Natural Resources in the sub county, its issues, and general aspects of livelihood systems in the area. Discussion points and comments were recorded on questionnaire sheets. Afterwards, river sources and degraded sites,

wetland encroachment areas, forests, infrastructural works and other such were visited, where GPS coordinates were recorded, photographs taken and input from local villagers obtained.

Preparation of micro-catchment management plans

- I. The three mCMPs for Yelulu, Ora and Nyarwodho micro catchments have been completed and have been submitted by the Consultants for the Ministry’s approval
- II. The procurement of Consultants to prepare mCMPs in the four new micro catchments is nearing conclusion. The evaluation of the bidders’ proposals has been completed and only awaiting the approval of the evaluation report and recommendation for contract award by the Contracts Committee.
- III. Preliminary studies and baseline assessments are currently being undertaken in the four new micro catchments to build a comprehensive water and natural resources knowledge base to facilitate the rapid preparation of the mCMPs in these micro catchments

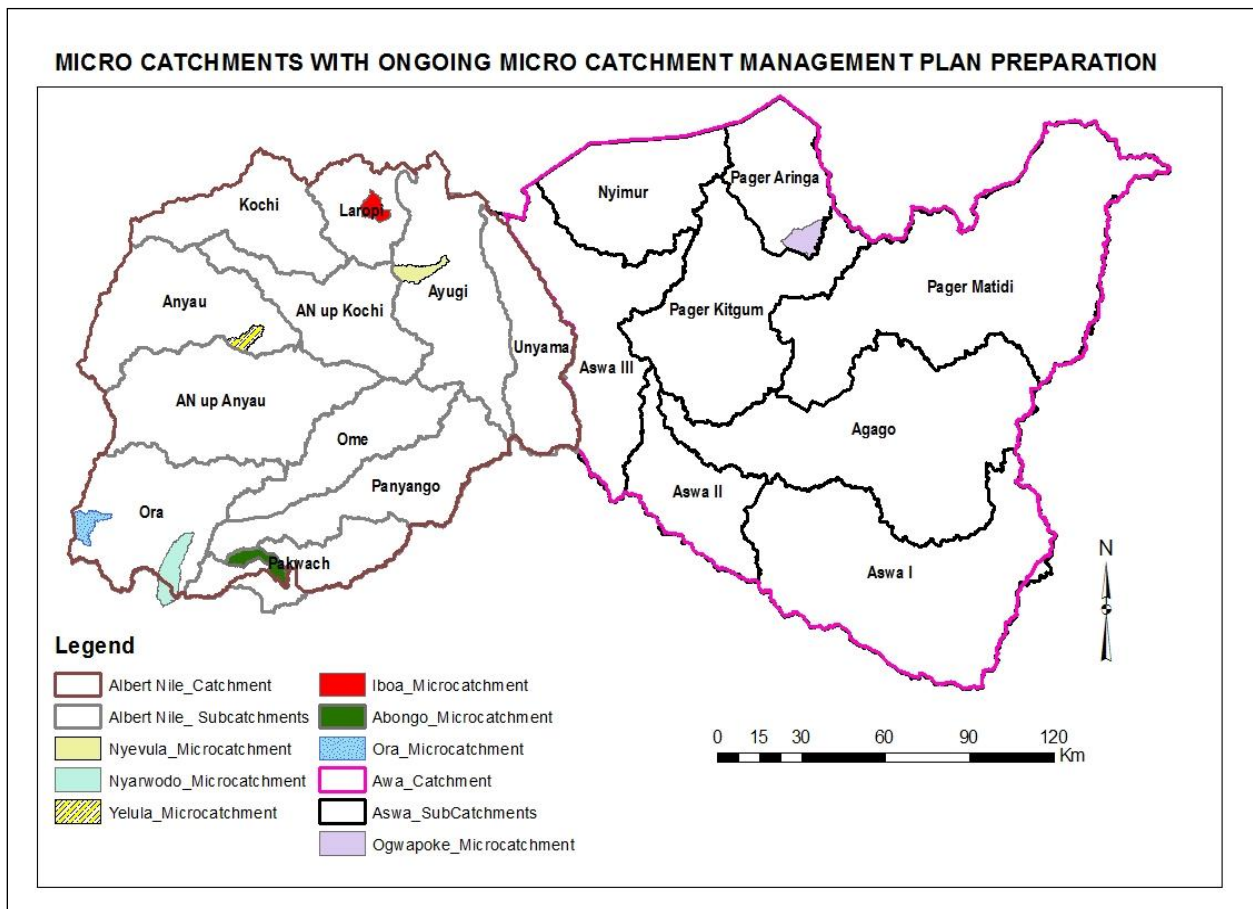


Fig.6 : Micro catchments with completed/ongoing mCMP preparation

Preparation of NRM guidelines/bye laws

The Consultant (Mr. Karumundu Rollanda) who will spearhead the preparation of the natural resources’ management guidelines/bye-laws in micro catchments of Yelulu, Ora and Nyarwodho

has already been procured and the draft contract awaits approval of the Contracts Committee.

Capacity building/training of beneficiary communities in IWRM approaches

A total of six trainings or capacity building sessions (2 per micro catchment) have been conducted by the UNWMZ in the three micro catchments that were undergoing mCMP preparation. These trainings targeted local communities in the micro catchments and introduced communities to the basic principles and practices of IWRM and sustainable management and utilization/exploitation of natural environmental resources such as land, water, wetlands and forests.

3.3.2 Physical and natural water infrastructure constructed or renovated

The implementation of activities under this output had not yet kick-started during the reporting period.

Other activities conducted under WRM

Second Project Steering Committee Meeting – 9th July 2019

The second PSC meeting was held on 9th July 2019 at the DWRM Boardroom on the first floor of the Ministry of Water and Environment complex in Luzira. It was attended by 4 out of the 5 committee members with the PS, MWE being represented by the Director of Water Resources Management, and other staff members from the project executing entity. The meeting was held to review and approve the progress report, review and approve the workplan and procurement plan for the FY 2019-2020 and consider and approve request for roll-over of project activities and resources of FY2018-2019.

The meeting was successfully held and the request for roll-over and thereafter consolidated procurement plan and workplan and budget for FY 2019-2020 was approved with amendments. Several recommendations to ensure expeditious project implementation were also made with the view of ensuring that the project is delivered within time and cost as planned.



Fig.8: Participants at the 2nd PSC meeting-9th July 2019, DWRM Boardroom, MWE HQs

3.4 Output 0: Programme Coordination

NURI CF has provided coordination and technical back-stopping for the implementation of NURI activities during the reporting period. CF has a team of 10 technical staff and six drivers. Six technical staff are based in Kampala and four in the regional offices in Arua, Moyo and Kitgum. CF is also involved in a number of supporting activities besides the coordination roles. During the reporting period, the following activities were implemented:

3.4.1 Inception Activities

Inception activities, including the signing of MoUs and the launching of NURI activities are covered in the NURI Inception Report.

3.4.2 Procurement activities

During the reporting period the NURI procurement guidelines were reviewed. The programme started implementation using guidelines applied under the predecessor programme, RDNUC. During the reporting period these guidelines were reviewed and adapted to the needs of the NURI programme under guidance from RDE and making use of general Danida guidelines. Adjustments were introduced effective from 21 May 2019.

- Elaboration of a new procurement manual with input from NURI CF and RDE. The new procurement manual was developed in-house and aligned with Danida procurement rules and best praxis principles for fair, transparent and competitive procurement processes.
- Procurement of major groups of goods. While continuing the principle of decentralization of procurement, NURI CF tested the possible benefits of centralized procurement by floating a larger tender some items of the input to farmer groups. These items had previously been procured individually by the IUs. The centralized tender resulted in a 40% saving, around 30-40 million UGX, in comparison with the previous year's procurement of same items.
- By the end of the reporting period NURI CF had initiated all procurement of goods in the approved procurement plan. Some proceedings, especially related to riding gear, were extended due to a decision to test participatory approaches in regards to specification of good characteristics. The use of this approach is still to be evaluated.
- Accelerated procurement under no-cost extension. NURI CF agreed with RDE to extend RDNUC by a quarter within the RDNUC budget. The no-cost extension allowed NURI to finance some activities that would otherwise have been delayed until the initiation of NURI activities on 1 April 2019. These procurements included some inputs to farmer groups as well as procurement of 25 motorcycles, for which delivery took place in the second quarter of 2019.

- Major round of repair of existing fleet of motorcycles. Due to the lead time on fleet replacement, the NURI CF initiated a thorough assessment and repair and maintenance of the existing fleet of 234 motorcycles from RDNUC, through authorised service providers. By the end of the reporting period only 9 motorcycles were not functional. Based on the success of this activity, periodically repetition of the exercise are planned.

3.4.3 Financial management activities

During the reporting period the NURI financial management manuals were reviewed. The programme started implementation making use of the existing guidelines applied under the predecessor programme, RDNUC, and during the reporting period these guidelines were reviewed and adapted to the needs of the NURI programme.

- *Elaboration of new allowance manual.* Initially, during the no-cost extension payments were based on praxis inherited from RDNUC. NURI CF elaborated a manual for NURI allowances which was implemented from the beginning of April. During second quarter of 2019 RDE requested NURI management to align the allowance manual to that of RDE's locally contracted staff and at the same time emphasized that allowances should only be paid against formal rules and regulations. NURI management revised the manual with effect from 1 July 2019.
- *Design of chart of accounts.* The RDNUC chart of accounts was reviewed to better suit the needs of NURI CF. A uniform chart of accounts was created, with input from NURI CF and accountants and RDE. The new chart structure allows the bookkeeping to adapt to changes in the programme implementation while at the same time enable comparison of activities between the financial years.
- *Transitioning to cloud-based accounting package.* To ensure timely monitoring and support to the Implementing Units' financial management Quickbooks Online was assessed to be a suitable and value-for-money choice. The transition was particularly efficient because it built on the offline systems used under RDNUC. The new cloud-based system was effectively implemented during the 2nd quarter of 2019.
- *Transitioning to cashless travel and meeting activities.* To limit risks and transaction costs related to cash handling, NURI is transitioning to use of digital transfers where feasible, including an increased use of online banking functionalities, mobile money transfers etc.

- *Budgeting for no-cost extension period and for NURI Programme for 2019.* With RDE's request for revision of the programme documents, the NURI budget required a corresponding revision. To ensure financing of activities during the period of revision, NURI CF request a no-cost extension of RDNUC. The no-cost extension required NURI management to elaborate a formal reallocation between RDNUC budget lines and a revision of the RDNUC budget to include a 5th quarter of 2018. The intensive process of revising the NURI budget itself to align with the new programme documents was completed by the end of the no-cost extension period.
- *Restructuring the finance/procurement department:* During the last quarter of the year, the Finance and administration section of NURI was restructured where roles and responsibilities were clarified/redefined (Finance Officer, Administrative Assistant and the Senior Driver). This was done to improve the efficiency of the finance and administration unit as they support in the implementation of the Programme as a whole.
- *Financial monitoring visits:* As a requirement by the Danish Authorities, Financial monitoring trips were carried out by RDE in company of the CF during the year. The trips were intended for assess the progress made in the implementation of planned activities and identify areas of concern requiring CF/RDE management attention and to clarify on CF/RDE policies and guidelines.
- *Logistical support in trainings:* As part of the implementation of the programmed activities, the finance and administration staff have been involved in logistical support to technical staff during specialised trainings. This included identification of venues through the procurement procedures, payment of staff allowances and transport planning.

3.4.4 Human resources – Recruitment and development

The human resource department aims to create an enabling atmosphere for staff in the execution of their roles and responsibilities. Staff under MWE and DRC are not managed under the NURI HR department, which focuses on Implementing Units under Output 1, as well as NURI CF team. Major activities of the department during the reporting period are elaborated below:

NURI CF and CSA unit restructuring

NURI CF has introduced the position of a National Programme Coordinator, based in West Nile during the year. Two of the largest Implementing Units have introduced the position of CSA coordinator to boost management capacity. These positions have been filled through internal promotion. The VSLA team has been expanded in those districts with the highest work load, so that each officer covers not more than 100 VSLAs.

Recruitment processes

As at 31 December 2019, the total number of NURI CSA staff members was 287. HRC successfully supported the recruitment and selection of 129 additional CSA staff during 2019, to start work in early 2020. This was done across the four NURI Agricultural Resilient Units (RAUs) in Adjumani, Moyo, Kitgum and Agago and the two Implementing Partners in Nebbi (AFARD) and Arua (DFA).

Additionally, 27 enumerators to support the Baseline and Monitoring and Evaluation Surveys and 57 Community Based Trainers (CBT) for VSLA implementation support were recruited during the year, with support from the HR department.

HRC introduced a standardized assessment procedure for the selection and recruitment of CSA workforce across programme through use of Online applications system. All trending vacancies are immediately uploaded on the NURI website. NURI jobs are posted in National media with a visible disclaimer to curb increasing impersonation and fraud.

Programme wide there were four voluntary resignations during the year, with one Marketing Coordinator, an AES and 2 AEOs departing.

Managing and Developing staff

All programme employees and supervisors participated in the mandatory annual performance appraisal process to appraise job performance over the year 2019. Performance reviews were carried out for all CF, RAU and IPs staff. The majority of CSA staff registered more than satisfactory performance rating and had most of their performance goals and targets met for the year. The aim of performance review was to reinforce the performance culture of the programme work force towards better organizational performance and greater clarity around expectations and results.

Finance and Administration CF function (FAO, AA, and Senior driver) personnel had their statement of duties revised with support from HRC, PMA and NPC, giving increased clarity on expectations and reporting lines.

NURI work force Performance Management System tools improved considerably. All employees had performance logs to capture critical accomplishments in their respective spaces, all are required to carry out self-evaluations before performance reviews with their supervisors. Development areas are discussed alongside Performance Improvement Plans for staff with performance challenges.

IP and RAU supervisors were supported to make quick transition to Performance Management System through in-house capacity building engagement / workshops spearheaded by HRC. Four performance management internal workshops were delivered during the period.

Team building

Team Building engagements were held across the programme facilitated by external consultants in the case of NURI CF team. NURI 's workforce team building engagements were designed to increase the effectiveness, morale boost and enhance workforce cohesion. Almost all NURI CSA workforce participated in team building activities during the year. Seven separate Team building events were held during the year in different location for the different Units. NURI CF supported with Team building budget facilitation and concept approval for Implementing Units.

Remuneration and benefits

RDE approved a 4.2% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all NURI CF and CSA Implementing Units. COLA arrears for the year were paid in September.

Due to a change in the policy regarding gratuity all implementing Units personnel were paid accrued gratuity up to July 2019 after which all salaries paid are consolidated gratuity inclusive.

NURI staff and dependents medical insurance scheme was changed to a contributory (80:20) scheme during the year. At the same time dependants were brought on board. This was in-line with standardizing the benefits across the programme with RDE national staff and according to guidelines from the RDE. AAR was selected as the service provider, and the contract was renewed towards year end. At year end a total 197 principals and 254 dependents were enrolled on scheme drawn from NURI CF, Kitgum/Lamwo, Agago, Moyo, and Adjumani RAUS and Arua DFA and AFARD staff. The total number of dependents and principals will increase significantly in 2020 with an increasing workforce and dependants of the two implementing partners coming onto the scheme.

Insurance against work related illness, sickness, injuries and accidents are covered under GPA. NURI registered 100% compliance with the Workers Compensation Act. All NURI programme Staff at CF and Implementing Units had their GPA policy provided by UAP. Old mutual renewed for another 1 year.

Employee relations and grievance management

CF registered minimal grievances and disciplinary related cases during the period across the programme, managing through on-going mentorship emerging leadership and management challenge including a number of engagements with teams in the field.

Focus areas for improvement

- (i) Performance management. HRC will focus on supporting for incorporating a formal 360-degree feedback mechanism into the NURI annual performance rating exercise specifically for NURI CF staff and Coordinators at the Units.
- (ii) Leadership and Management Capacity building in Collaboration with the PMA's office for supervisors and line managers across the programme.

- (iii) Compensation and benefits. HRC will focus on monitoring costs related to the salary adjustments; as well as the importance of being informed of practices of other comparable projects to NURI. Trends and situations in the country labour market and recommend appropriate retention strategies for critical talent to CF top management.

3.4.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring activities for the reporting period have focused on establishing the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and processes for the programme as well as building staff capacity in reporting and data collection.

Development of manuals and formats

- NURI CF developed the M&E manual with performance targets defined and discussed stakeholders. Although final completion and approval of the manual was delayed, indicators and targets were defined in the Programme documents and activities were all aligned to the results framework.
- Reporting formats were developed for quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports and shared with implementing partners and RAUs.
- Data collection forms for farmer group production and marketing plans were designed to be more user friendly, based on experience and feed-back from field teams.

Capacity Building on M&E

- Implementing unit's staff responsible for reporting were trained and mentored on the reporting format, schedule and content requirements.
- Recruited staff and management were orientated on NURI indicators and targets, data requirements and roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in M&E as part of the induction and training process.
- CSA staff were trained in M&E attached to the implementing partners and RAUs. The training focussed on the data collection processes, analysis and reporting as key functions in M&E.

Reporting and Data Collection

- NURI CSA database was developed and piloted. The Database will capture production data from the farmer groups supported under the NURI programme
- Semi-annual and quarterly reports were prepared and shared with stakeholders.
- NURI baseline study was conducted in 7 districts following training on data collection for enumerators. Data collection and entry was completed by end of the year. Analysis and report writing were ongoing in the first quarter of 2020.

- A cassava measurement system was development to guide data collection on cassava as a strategic crop, based on past experience and technical advice from experts and field staff.

4.0 Progress against Outputs and Outcome Targets

NURI aims to increase the agricultural output of small-scale farmers including refugees and hosts. Agriculturally-related rural infrastructure will be renovated and constructed using a labour-intensive approach and agriculturally related physical and natural water infrastructure will be constructed and made more resilient to climate change. All this will contribute to enhanced resilience and equitable economic development in supported areas of Northern Uganda, including for refugees and host communities.

It is early in the programme to measure progress against outputs and outcomes, all of which are included in the NURI programme documents and M&E manual (available on www.nuri.ag) but there has been progress at activity level that will clearly contribute toward the achievement of targets.

4.1 Output 1: Climate Smart Agriculture - Increased agricultural output of small-scale farmers

Main activity 1.1 Identify and train target farmers groups

- Assessed and selected 755 old national groups, 855 new national groups and 310 refugee groups for support under NURI programme
- Supported the selection of strategic crops by the different implementing districts. The crops included sesame, soybean, beans, sunflower, onions, rice and cassava.
- Facilitated national farmers and refugee groups in selection of group enterprises from the enterprise/strategic crop list
- Facilitated new national groups to develop production and marketing plans for the strategic crops selected
- Planned and conducted specialised trainings for extension staff on CSA and related topics

Main Activity 1.2 VSLA training of Farmer Groups including refugees

- Assessed and selected a total of 393 farmer groups to be supported and trained in VSLA (includes new national and refugee groups)

4.2 Output 2: Rural Infrastructure – Agriculturally related rural infrastructure renovated and/or constructed using labour intensive approach

Main Activity 2.1 Prepare infrastructure investment plans

- Developed inception and implementation workplans and budgets for RI activities
- Conducted district inception meetings about rural infrastructure activities
- Established and reconstituted Parish Development Committees
- Revalidated Parish Development Plans
- Completed preparation of investments plans for six districts (Arua, Kitgum, Nebbi, Madi-Okollo, Lamwo and Adjumani). The plans were approved for implementation

Main Activity 2.2 Approved investment projects implemented

- Formation of groups for public works was partially done for Kitgum where three sub-counties had completed the process

4.3 Output 3: Water Resource Management – Agriculturally-related physical and natural infrastructure constructed or made more climate resilient

Main Activity 3.1 Develop WRM micro-catchment plans

- Developed selection criteria for micro-catchments
- Selected three micro-catchments for implementation through field visits and discussions with communities around the micro-catchments
- Introduced the project to beneficiary districts, with sensitization of relevant stakeholders at district level.

5.0 Status on Risks and Assumptions

5.1 Assumptions

It is early in the programme to make an assessment on assumptions, but with the roll out of activities an indication of the likelihood that assumptions will hold can be made.

Table 9.1 Status on Assumptions

No.	Assumption / Risk	Status
KA CSA	Farmer groups will be open to learning climate smart agricultural methods and will adopt and apply the techniques on their farms	Farmer groups have been selected based on their interest and commitment. Past experience and early indications are promising. Early adoption studies will examine this assumption in 2020
KA CSA	Farmer groups will be willing to participate and cost-share support such as produce stores	The willingness to cost-share varies across the groups, this has been taken into account in the planning process with individual groups.
KA CSA	Refugees have access to sufficient land for production activities	Selection of mixed groups is calibrated according to the availability of land. Experience from year one is positive.
KA RI	Participating communities willing and able to contribute to physical investments through labour and maintenance of infrastructure	The interventions have been received well by DLGs. Various approaches to maintenance are included in DRC implementation plans.
KA RI	Climatic conditions are favourable for construction works	Construction works yet to begin in earnest.
KA RI	Local contractors are available and able to meet quality standards	Construction works yet to begin in earnest, but early indications are positive.
KA WRM	UNWMZ is able to establish collaboration and agreements	Initial contact with Districts has been well received
KA WRM	Stakeholders are able to identify suitable micro-catchments	Seven out of eight micro-catchments already identified
KA WRM	Participating communities willing and able to contribute to physical investments	Construction works yet to begin

KA CSA= Key Assumption for Climate Smart Agriculture, KA RI = Key Assumption for Rural Infrastructure, KA WRM= Key Assumption Water Resource Management

5.2 Risk Monitoring

Risk factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk assessment and response	Update at December 2019
Programmatic risks				
Creation of aid dependency by supporting small-scale farmers to access subsidized low-cost inputs.	Likely	Major	NURI's strategy is to provide inputs only to those farmer groups that fulfil certain conditions, like co-financing and preparation of a business plan. Also, subsidized inputs will constitute a small proportion of the total intervention.	This risk has not materialized. Needs assessment of Old Groups is ongoing and the level of subsidy will be such as to avoid dependency. The risk remains more likely for refugee communities.
Land conflicts due to unclear land ownership and increasing pressure on land and/or land-grabbing by powerful entities or individuals.	Likely	Major	Land conflicts are ubiquitous in Uganda and the risk may be exacerbated by the success of this engagement. Mitigation through ensuring land ownership is clearly defined and recorded in the micro-catchment plans and through inclusive planning processes, locally driven implementation and strengthening of local communities.	There have been minor land conflicts, managed successfully on a case by case basis, for example where demonstration sites have been relocated. All cases are reported to the LLG authorities and District and local authorities have been supportive.
Poor sustainability of constructed or renovated infrastructure due to insufficient maintenance.	Likely	Major	NURI will strengthen learning from cases where mobilization of local communities for maintenance has been successful, and continuously explore and share information on best practice.	DRC has experience in this area, and have proposals for mobilizing for maintenance, building on documented successes. It is early to assess.
Adverse climatic events, such as floods or droughts	Likely	Major	While mitigation of this risk is somewhat outside the scope of NURI, adaptation to the risk is a key rationale for NURI's	CSA measures are being introduced and staff trained. There have been cases of

Risk factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk assessment and response	Update at December 2019
			interventions concerning climate smart agriculture and water resources management, and climate considerations will also be integrated in infrastructure renovation and construction.	flooding where farmers have been successful in digging drainage trenches with advice from NURI extensionists.
Women will not actually get empowered due to deep-rooted cultural practices and norms.	Likely	Major	NURI's strengthened focus on female empowerment is in itself a recognition of such deep-rooted cultural practices and norms. Empowerment in leadership, training in financial literacy and family planning are seen as key opportunities.	Under WAY programme a consultant is to be hired to assess gender aspects of NURI CSA activities. The outcome of this consultancy will be useful in strengthening the response to this risk
Local communities become disgruntled due to disagreement with the selection of beneficiaries and projects.	Likely	Minor	NURI will emphasize transparency and inclusion in decision-making processes. Stakeholders will be sensitized before project selection and distribution of resources will be done in a transparent way. Projects identified through participatory process will be preferred.	As there are no major hand-outs this risk is minimal. It may re-emerge once subsidies to Old Group's marketing activities are implemented.
Interventions by other DPs offer more lucrative support for beneficiaries and better salaries for staff	Likely	Minor	NURI will coordinate with other DPs to avoid geographical overlap and 'competition' for beneficiaries, and to coordinate general remuneration levels for both community participation and project staff. The risk is greatest in Settlements.	As funding to livelihoods activities in settlements has been significantly reduced this risk has reduced.
Institutional risks				
Corruption or misuse of funds among NURI	Likely	Major	Mitigation through implementation modalities based on RDNUC experience. Lessons learned from financial management	Financial and procurement guidelines and monitoring are implemented.

Risk factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk assessment and response	Update at December 2019
implementing partners (also programmatic risk)			safeguards under RDNUC will be incorporated in the Management and Accounts Manuals.	
Self-implementation by NURI CF leads to lack of sustainability and excessive management burdens.	Unlikely	Major	This risk mitigated by building on previous positive effects and experience of self-implementation: Many local staff are trained and equipped with relevant skills, and efficiency is high due to decreased fiduciary risks and minimal politicisation of activities. Increased management burden was addressed during the formulation of NURI. Staffing level of the CF was consequently expanded from six professional staff during RDNUC to 10 with the creation of the positions of Financial Management Advisor (FMA), Human Resource Coordinator (HRC), VSLA Coordinator and adding one more Regional Coordinator (North West Nile).	Creation of the position of National Programme Coordinator has spread management burden, as has the review of responsibilities in the finance team. Quarterly CF+ meetings have strengthened management of CSA activities
Limited engagement of local governments, as they do not implement.	Unlikely	Minor	As NURI will rely on the active engagement of DLGs, it is designed to ensure full alignment to their structures and procedures. Furthermore, capacity building will be integrated in all NURI interventions.	DLGs and LLG are enthusiastic about the NURI programme and engaged. New districts and districts with few development projects are generally highly engaged.

A risk which emerged during 2019 was that of conflict between Districts where new districts have been split off from NURI districts, as in Moyo/Obongi and Arua/Madi-Okollo. This is managed by a transparent splitting of resources between the sub-divided districts

and by engaging with the new districts. Where there was conflict NURI followed fully the lead of GoU and did not engage in any political debate. The creation of new sub-counties is also an emerging issue which is being addressed.

6.0 Reporting on Expenditure at output level

The total budget for the NURI engagement is DKK 285 million over a period of five years 2018-2022. The Danish commitment is made in Danish Kroner (DKK).

For WRM, the budget of DKK 35 million the funds derive from the Climate Change Envelope, disbursements of which are centrally coordinated by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen. Disbursement budgets for that output therefore have to be coordinated with the relevant unit in the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The budget for Coordination activities is DKK 24 million and for contingencies DKK 14 million. The remaining 212 million is split equally between CSA and RI activities.

The DKK 14 million for contingencies can be used to cover unforeseen expenses for planned activities (budget margin for extraordinary price increases, money exchange losses, unforeseen expenses etc.). According to the "Guidelines for Programmes & Projects January 2018", contingencies can only be used within the same development engagement without limits. Should this be insufficient, the rules of reallocations between development engagements must be adhered to. The contingency funds may be used before 2022.

Table 6.0: Overall budget for NURI for the period 2018-2022 (DKK millions)

Output	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Climate Smart Agriculture	-	16	32	32	26	106
Rural Infrastructure	-	16	32	32	26	106
Water Resources Management	3	8.5	8.5	8	7	35
Coordination incl. TA and M&E	-	6	6	6	6	24
Contingency	-				14	14
Total	3	46.5	78.5	78	79	285

For each partner, under each output, annual work plans and budgets were prepared based on a budget frame provided by the RDE through NURI CF. The annual budget was prepared through a consultative process between implementing units and CF. Details on the budgeting process are included under section 8, Financial Management and Procurement, 8.1 Budget and budget approval.

NURI Fund utilization for 2019

In 2019, a total budget of 22,504,433,990 UGX was approved by the RDE; 21,624,152,803 UGX was disbursed and of that was 12,057,488,284 utilised. Funds utilization rate in 2019 was 53.58%. See table below:

Table 6.1: NURI BUDGET UTILIZATION FOR 2019

NURI CONSOLIDATED REPORT				
Budget vs. Actuals – In Uganda Shillings				
April - December, 2019				
Intervention	Disbursed Funds	Actual Expenditure	Approved Budget	% Budget absorption
Coordination Incl TA and M&E	8,172,990,238	1,153,153,782	2,642,881,387	43.63%
0.Coordination, TA and M&E	8,172,990,238	1,153,153,782	2,642,881,387	43.63%
Climate Smart Agriculture	5,788,220,014	8,192,917,544	9,809,118,615	83.52%
1.1.1. Assess and select strategic crops and beneficiary farmer groups, or where no groups exist, wo		77,602,880	249,937,000	31.05%
1.1.2. Prepare plans with the selected farmer groups depending on their situation and needs		42,555,600	52,822,500	80.56%
1.1.3. Train in Climate smart agricultural practices, including soil and water management.		4,856,053,604	5,670,194,200	85.64%
1.1.4. Train in and support collective marketing.		58,972,107	173,595,004	33.97%
1.2. Train target farmer groups in financial literacy, especially through formation and support of		452,803,932	936,692,604	48.34%
1.3. Provide capacity building and operational support to the implementing partner		2,652,776,471	2,714,487,307	97.73%
1.4. Provide capacity building and operational support to district Production Departments		52,152,950	11,390,000	457.88%
Rural Infrastructure	5,351,448,863	2,392,955,418	7,554,473,988	31.68%
2.1.1 Select Types of Rural Infra		89,531,821	192,875,900	46.42%
2.1.2 Review & Update Parish & Subcounty Development Plans		80,622,922	147,932,424	54.50%
2.1.3 Prepare district Investment plans with DLGs		85,314,046	333,799,682	25.56%
2.2.1 Mobilise local Communities and train their PMCs		665,000	36,191,376	1.84%
2.2.2 Capacity Building & Operational support to Engineering Dept & DLG		2,136,821,629	6,843,674,606	31.22%
Water Resources Management by MWE	2,311,493,688	318,461,540	2,497,960,000	12.75%
2018/2019	1,000,000,000	0	1,185,040,000	0.00%
2019/ 2020	1,311,493,688	318,461,540	1,312,920,000	24.26%
TOTAL	21,624,152,803	12,057,488,284	22,504,433,990	53.58%

Note: actual expenditure WRM by MWE covers period March – October 2019 only. Nov.-Dec. figures yet to be received.

Table 6.2: Summary per Implementing partner/RAU

NURI Coordination Function				
Disbursement, Expenditure & Budget per Implementing Unit				
April - December 2019				
	Disbursed Funds	Actual Expenditure	Approved Budget	% of Budget
NURI Coordination Function	8,172,990,238	4,123,137,272	5,936,929,293	69.45%
Arua DFA	1,568,869,467	1,425,945,432	1,534,054,900	92.95%
AFARD	1,413,997,900	1,374,861,703	1,258,474,400	109.25%
RAU Moyo	258,521,420	227,293,120	548,080,001	41.47%
RAU Adjumani	272,544,967	279,877,381	548,080,001	51.07%
RAU Kitgum	1,474,865,539	1,136,372,311	1,549,486,401	73.34%
RAU Agago	799,420,721	778,584,107	1,076,895,006	72.30%
DRC	5,351,448,863	2,392,955,418	7,554,473,988	31.68%
WRM	2,311,493,688	318,461,540	2,497,960,000	12.75%
TOTAL	21,624,152,803	12,057,488,284	22,504,433,990	53.58%

Note: actual expenditure WRM by MWE covers period March – October 2019 only. Nov.-Dec. figures yet to be received.

Share of overhead paid by RDE

Under Output 0, a number of payments are made directly by the RDE. These are not reflected in the above table, which focuses on payments made by NURI CF. In 2019 direct payments by RDE amounted to DKK 2,410,698, or UGX 1,315,430,000. If this expenditure is taken into account the budget expenditure rate increases from 43.63% under output 0, to 93.41%.

Intervention	Actual Expenditure	Approved Budget	% of Budget
0.Coordination, TA and M&E	2,468,583,782	2,642,881,387	93.41%

The total 2019 expenditure rate for NURI increases from 53.58% to 59.42%:

	Actual Expenditure	Approved Budget	% of Budget
Total expenditure	13,372,918,28	22,504,433,990	59.42%

7.0 Challenges and lessons

Inception and start-up activities

There were a number of late changes to documentation and procedures that caused a slower than expected start-up of activities. These are detailed in the NURI inception report. The most important were the redrafting of the programme documents and delays in the procurement of the implementing partner for Output 2 - rural infrastructure and implementation of water activities planned by MWE under Output 3. However, by year end these initial delays had been overcome and are not expected to impact on achievement of targets.

Weather and environmental challenge

The success of NURI in achieving its development goal is very much dependant on weather, particularly for the CSA activities. In 2019 second season rains stretched beyond normal and caused rotting, poor pod formation and in general low yields. Striga weed has been persistently reported by farmers growing maize, millet and sorghum. These are the very challenges which NURI sets out to mitigate, however this mitigation is a long-term process and dependant on wide spread adoption. Extreme weather conditions remain difficult to mitigate against.

Working with the old national farmer groups

Kick-starting activities with old national farmer groups (groups selected from those supported under RDNUC) has been a challenge because the element of cost-sharing and needs-based support model is new and has been under developed. The process of identifying the needs of each groups, rather than offering a menu of options for support, has been time consuming and at times difficult to conceptualize for extension staff and farmers. The introduction of a Tier system has been useful in moving forward, and useful lessons have been learnt.

Inputs subsidy (seeds)

NURI CSA is based on providing extension support and training to farmers. The training approach makes use of various training tools, including demonstration plots. In many cases, the income from the demonstration plots can help to subsidise farmers purchase of seeds for the following season, boosting the likelihood that farmers will practice what they have learnt in the training and demonstration, in their own fields. Where the costs of seeds are particularly high, such as for sunflower, and Irish potato the purchase of seeds by farmers is more of a challenge. This means many farmers may choose not to continue with the selected strategic crop on their own fields, or may use cheaper, local seeds. This is an ongoing challenge which NURI CF will try to find ways to address in collaboration with implementing partners and farmer groups.

Motorcycle accidents

From the month of May to July 2019, there has been heavy rains in all the implementation districts. Many connection roads became slippery and impassable for the extension staff. Provision

of quality riding gear and training in defensive driving has helped to mitigate this challenge and will be instituted as early as possible when new staff join.

Procurement policy and guidelines for NURI

Procurement policy, procedure and guidelines have been reviewed causing some delays in the implementation of activities during the reporting period. A key challenge experienced has been providing the right specifications for the needed goods and services. NURI CF training and mentoring of end-users has served to remedy the situation.

Working in Refugee settlements

In Rhino Camp settlement it has not been possible for staff to find accommodation near the settlement. They have therefore commuted to carry out their work with NURI groups. This has been particularly difficult because of the persistent rains and the poor condition of the roads. NURI CF has explored various options to address the problem, but has not made a decision on the best solution in the changing environment by the end of the year.

Assisting refugees in accessing agricultural land through close contact with nationals in mixed groups is one of the strategies used by NURI to meet the objectives of the programme. This is an ongoing challenge because of both access and affordability issues. NURI CF and implementing partners will continue to monitor the situation and explore options, including collaboration with other organisations working on the same issues.

Delays in implementation of WRM activities

The development of Micro-catchment plans for the first 3 selected Micro-catchments to be implemented under NURI have taken longer than expected, with delays in procurement of consultants and delay in the deliverables by the consultants. The plans are expected to be delivered in early 2020.

8.0 Implementation of Decisions and recommendations

There have been no new reviews or appraisals since the launch of the programme, however the recommendations of the NURI reappraisal carried out in October 2018 have been implemented during the reporting period.

8.1 Recommendations from NURI Reappraisal, 25 October 2018

Programme/ Project Document

Recommendation

Prepare a comprehensive Project Document, integrating WRM and including a Logical Framework and a clear and graphically illustrated Theory of Change

Follow-up / Implementation

The NURI Programme documents have been redrafted and approved, integrating WRM, logical frame-work and an elaborate Theory of Change

SRHR activity implementation

Recommendation

In support for promoting gender equality and working on SRHR, ensure that the implementing partner employs field staff with a social affairs background and gender skills

Follow-up / Implementation

The SRHR activities have been adjusted so the role of NURI extension staff is to support linkages between communities and SRHR and GBV activities that are supported and strengthened through the WAY component. They have been trained accordingly with some follow-up training. Collaboration with other Outputs under the WAY programme are expected to be strengthened in 2020.

Annex 1: Funds Disbursements

UGX Disbursements to NURI - 2019

NURI 2019					
Disbursed to CF					
	1000 UGX			Rate of expenditure:	
Unit	Grant Disbursed	Budget	Expenditure	Grant Disbursed	Budget
Coordination Function					
- disbursed, RDE to CF	19,312,659				
- disbursed, CF to IUs	-11,139,669				

NURI CF	8,172,990	5,936,929	4,123,137	50%	69%
Disbursed, CF to IUs					
Arua DFA	1,568,869	1,534,055	1,425,945	91%	93%
AFARD	1,413,998	1,258,474	1,374,862	97%	109%
RAU Moyo	258,521	548,080	227,293	88%	41%
RAU Adjumani	272,545	548,080	279,877	103%	51%
RAU Kitgum	1,474,866	1,549,486	1,136,372	77%	73%
RAU Agago	799,421	1,076,895	778,584	97%	72%
DRC	5,351,449	7,554,474	2,392,955	45%	32%
IUs excl. CF	11,139,669	14,069,545	7,615,889	68%	54%
IUs incl. CF	19,312,659	20,006,474	11,739,027	61%	59%
<p>Note: Rent and security services for Adjumani RAU was paid by CF but correctly recorded as expenditure in the RAU's books. This has resulted in expenditure being greater than amount disbursed to the unit.</p>					